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STAFFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD



Annual Report on the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Children in Staffordshire

1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017

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INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Purpose of this Report

It is a statutory requirement under Section 14A of the Children Act 2004 for the Chair of a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), in this case Staffordshire, to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area.

This annual report provides a rigorous assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services that have responsibilities to safeguard children and accordingly it:

- Provides evidence of progress and achievements
- Identifies areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action
- Demonstrates the extent to which the functions of the LSCB are being effectively discharged
- Includes an account of progress made in implementing actions from Serious Case Reviews (SCR) and Learning Reviews
- Provides an outline of the assurances sought about the work of the Staffordshire Family Strategic Partnership Board

Who should read this report?

In accordance with statutory requirements and best practice this annual report has been sent to the Staffordshire Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities, Deputy Director of Children's Services, the Lead Member for Children's Services, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Chair of the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board and the Chief Officers of all partner organisations represented on the Safeguarding Children Board.

The report is presented to the Staffordshire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee demonstrating transparency and enabling further scrutiny and challenge.

Operational managers and frontline practitioners should be provided with a copy of the report to enable awareness of the work undertaken through the Board during 2016-2017 to help our wider workforce to understand what they have helped to achieve during the year and the plans for working together to achieve the desired safeguarding children outcomes for 2017-2018.

This report is published on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board website [SSCB Annual Reports](#) to provide a visible public account of the work of the Board and its connected partners.

Foreword

It is my privilege as Independent Chair to write the Foreword to this Annual Report of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

The current economic and social climate continues to be very challenging for families and for those professionals working with children who are at risk of neglect and abuse. Statutory services are working to capacity as a result of increasing numbers of referrals over recent years and at the same time partner agencies are facing pressures from a significant reduction in public funding and increased levels of poverty and deprivation within communities. This combination of socio-economic factors can result in extremely vulnerable families and the potential for increases in the numbers of cases of neglect and abuse of children and young people.



It is against this background that this annual report provides an overview of the work of the Board and how, despite operating in austere times with the reality of having to do more with less that, safeguarding partners are making a positive difference to ensuring that children and young people who may be at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect are protected. As you will read the Board has actively sought assurances as to the effectiveness of the local arrangements to protect children and young people by commissioning audits of the quality of case work practice in joint working between adult mental health services, drug and alcohol services and children's services and used the findings to drive improvements.

In my role as Independent Chair I have been able to see and continue to be impressed and encouraged by the energy, commitment and enthusiasm of Board members as well as the many front line practitioners that I have met and their clear focus on doing their very best for the children and young people whom we are here to protect from harm.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of all of our partners and supporters including the statutory, independent and voluntary community sector who have contributed significantly to the work of the Board during the year. I am particularly grateful to all who chair the Board sub groups and the Board Business teams who work so hard behind the scenes to ensure that our business programme works efficiently.

I look forward to working with you again next year.

John Wood QPM



ABOUT THE BOARD

Statutory context

The Children Act 2004 (sections 13 and 14) requires each Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to co-ordinate the actions of partner agencies and ensure the effectiveness of the local arrangements to safeguard children.

The statutory guidance, “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (Department for Education 2015) provides the framework informing how agencies should work together to help to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board has a range of roles, responsibilities and statutory functions as set out in the Children Act and Regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 that are summarised below:

- Participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the local authority
- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Monitoring the effectiveness of what is done to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Delivering effective multi-agency safeguarding training
- Undertaking serious case reviews
- Communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Publishing an Annual Report on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Composition and governance arrangements

The Board has a broad membership of statutory partners and others connected with safeguarding children and is chaired by an Independent Chair appointed by Staffordshire County Council in conjunction with Board members. The Board membership is shown at **Appendix 1** on page 73.

The existing contract of the Independent Chair is reviewed on an annual basis in the form of a review with the Staffordshire Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Families and Communities informed by reflections and formal appraisal from members of the Board.

The Board met four times during 2016/17. In relation to attendance at SCB meetings, a named deputy is accepted and through this arrangement the vast majority of members attended all meetings. The Chair communicates directly with the Chief Officer of partners not maintaining regular attendance to understand the reasons and to ensure active engagement.

An annual review of roles and responsibilities of Board members, the sub-groups chairs and Terms of Reference of each sub-group was undertaken in September 2016. Each SCB member is required to sign a copy of a Memorandum of Agreement which asks for confirmation that requirements of Board membership are met. This document is countersigned by the Chief

Officer of each individual agency. The SCB Constitution is next due to be reviewed in November 2017 to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

Relationship with other forums

The Board is dependent on the performance of agencies with a safeguarding remit for meeting its objectives. The Organisation Structure at **Appendix 2** on page 75 shows the sub-groups and the strategic partnerships with which the Board is required to agree responsibilities and reporting relationships to ensure collaborative action and mutual accountabilities.

A Memorandum of Understanding is in place between the Staffordshire Families Strategic Partnership Board (FSPB), the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.



Through the attendance of the Independent Chair and several members of the Safeguarding Children Board, links are maintained with the Staffordshire Families Strategic Partnership Board (FSPB), which is accountable in Staffordshire for overseeing the development and delivery of the Staffordshire's Children, Young People and Families Strategy 2016 – 2026 that has a specific focus on ensuring the welfare and safety of children and young people. The FSPB considers the annual report of the Safeguarding Children Board in preparing and refreshing the Children, Young People and Families Strategy. The Health and Wellbeing Board is required to consider the annual report in completing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The Safeguarding Children Board holds both those bodies accountable for their delivery of good safeguarding practice.

During 2016/17 the Independent Chair has met regularly with the:

- Councillors with lead responsibilities for children and young people
- Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families and Communities
- Head of Families First and Deputy Director for Children's Social Care (who is also Chair of Safeguarding Children Board Executive Group)

He attends the quarterly meeting of the Safer Staffordshire Strategic Board chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Safeguarding Children Board managers for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent meet on a regular basis with the Board manager of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board to ensure effective joint working and appropriate information

sharing. There have been benefits, particularly in relation to consistency of practice, from the three Boards having the same Independent Chair.



ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVENESS IN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Analysis of Effectiveness in Safeguarding Children

This section of the report provides an assessment of the effectiveness and performance of local services. The categories and themes do not cover all the factors influencing the risk to children and young people within Staffordshire. The focus is on key local vulnerabilities and related themes which the Board needs to have scrutiny and seek assurances about in order to help ensure the effectiveness of local inter-agency arrangements to protect children and young people.

About Staffordshire's Children

Approximately 168,824 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Staffordshire. This is approximately 20% of the total population in the area.

Approximately 15% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.

The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:

- in primary schools is 9.4% (the national average is 14.1%)
- in secondary schools is 8.7% (the national average is 12.9%)

There are 490 children and young people with a disability who are supported by the Children with Disabilities Team.

Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015, Staffordshire is a relatively affluent area but has notable pockets of high deprivation in some of its urban areas with 9% of its population living in the fifth most deprived areas nationally. In addition some of the remote rural areas in Staffordshire have issues with hidden deprivation, particularly around access to services.

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 8.5% of all children living in the area, compared with 25.1% in the country as a whole.

The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian British 4% and mixed 3%. The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:

- in primary schools is 7.5% (the national average is 20.6%)
- in secondary schools is 5% (the national average is 16.2%)

Contacts and Referrals to Children's Social Care

During 2016-2017 there were a total of 11,585 contacts to the Staffordshire Children's Social Care First Response Team (FRT), an increase of 3% from the previous year (11,253). This equates to an average of 223 contacts per week that cover a range of issues concerning the welfare of children and young people. The FRT is based within our local Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where a highly trained team of workers, including social workers and senior practitioners consider every contact received.

Of the 11,585 contacts made to the FRT 10,034 (86.6%) had an outcome of advice and information, 1240 (10.7%) were referred to Local Support Teams, the remaining 211 (2.7%) were no further action.

Following contact, the FRT aims to ensure that those children meeting thresholds for statutory assessments are progressed as referrals to Children's Social Care (CSC) social work teams. Local Authorities have a duty to undertake these assessments to determine what services to a child may need and any action required.

Staffordshire Children's Social Care received 9142 referrals in 2016-17. Referrals have increased from the previous year (8469) by 7.9%. The proportion of referrals resulting in no further action (NFA) has decreased, from 9.6% to 8.8%. Staffordshire's Social Care Services continue to work with partners to ensure that threshold and referral criteria are clearly understood by referring agencies and professionals.

The proportion of re-referrals within one year (21.0%) has increased slightly from last year (18.8%) though is below the statistical neighbours' (22.1%) and national (22.3%) averages. Staffordshire's re-referral rates over the last five years have been below the national and statistical neighbouring authorities' averages.

Children's Social Care Assessments

During 2016-2017, 10,489 social work assessments were completed; an increase of 7% from the previous year (9,792). 1,086 assessments were in progress as at 31/03/17.

The timeliness of child social work assessments completed in 45 days has remained stable at 84.4% (85.3% in 2015-2016). This performance is just above the national (83.4%) and statistical neighbouring authorities' (84.2%) rates. Staffordshire monitors assessment timeliness very closely every month to ensure continuous improvement and reduce the potential stress involved for families during the assessment process. Staffordshire continues to promote the use of an interactive safeguarding dashboard by managers which aims to avoid delays in families having a specialist assessment.

As at the end of March, the total number of cases open cross all Children's Social Care Families First service areas was 5054, a 10% decrease from the same period 12 months earlier (5620); this follows a focused drive to close cases promptly and avoid drift. The numbers of cases closing in 2016-2017 has increased by 19% from 2015-2016.

Children in Need (CiN)

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 defines a child in need as 'a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services'.

At the end of March 2017, Staffordshire had 2906 child in need cases open (including those in assessment), compared to 3323 at the end of March 2016, a decrease of 417; this is mainly due to improved recording processes, robust case management oversight ensuring that cases are assessed more promptly and case closures are being appropriately closed in a more timely way.

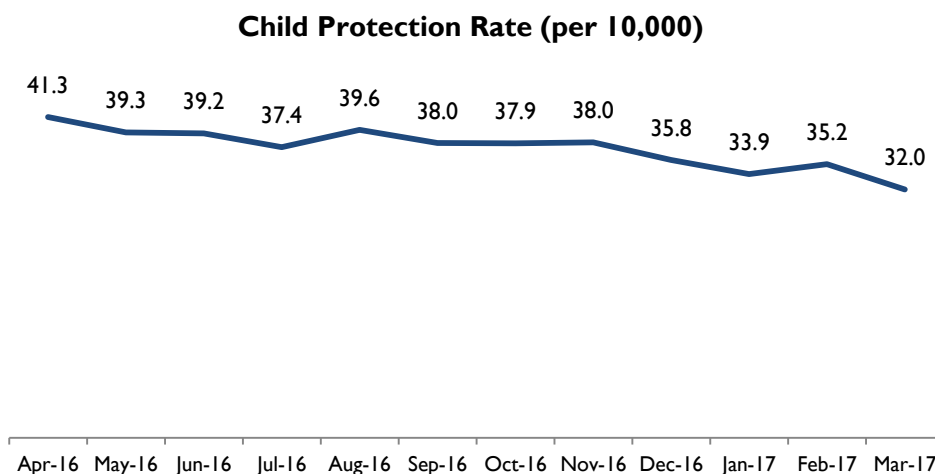
The national rate of Children in Need (includes CiN cases, CP and LAC) rate was 288.9 for Staffordshire, a decrease from the previous year (343.8); due to the CP population decreasing. This rate is below both the national (337.7) and statistical neighbouring authorities' (309.9) average for 2015-16.

One third (33.1%) of Staffordshire’s children in need cases open as at March 2017 had been open more than two years, similar to last year’s figure (32.9%) and in line with the national (30.9%) and statistical neighbours’ (30.3%) average for 2015-16.

Child Protection

Child protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect. A child protection plan is drawn up by the local authority. It sets out how the child can be kept safe, how things can be made better for the family and what support they will need. Parents are informed of the reason for the plan.

Child Protection Rate Diagram:



Between April 2016 and March 2017, the Child Protection population has been declining. This can be partially explained by the cyclic nature of children subject of a Child Protection Plan and proactive management of children subject of Child Protection Plans for 15 months or over by County Managers and the Independent Chairs Service. The proportion of children subject of a Child Protection Plan for greater than 15 months has reduced from 11% in April 2016 to 9% at the end of March 2017. Staffordshire’s rate at the end of March 2017 (32.0) is below the statistical neighbours’ (45.7) and the national (43.1) average (2015-2016).

706 children and young people in total became the subject of a child protection plan over the annual period (-13% from 2015-2016) and 871 ceased to be the subject of a plan (+21% from 2015-16). For the latter group of children this was a result of positive outcomes such as improved parenting capacity that led to a return home, living with other family and friends, special guardianships or adoption.

Staffordshire’s proportion of Initial Child Protection Conferences held within the required timescale of fifteen days from the start of the section 47 enquiries has increased this year, from 86.6% to 89.6%. This is higher than the national (76.7%), regional (76.5%) and statistical neighbours’ (77.1%) averages (2015-2016). Improvements have been made to data quality and

this is being monitored by Safeguarding Review Managers on a regular basis to ensure that timescales are being met.

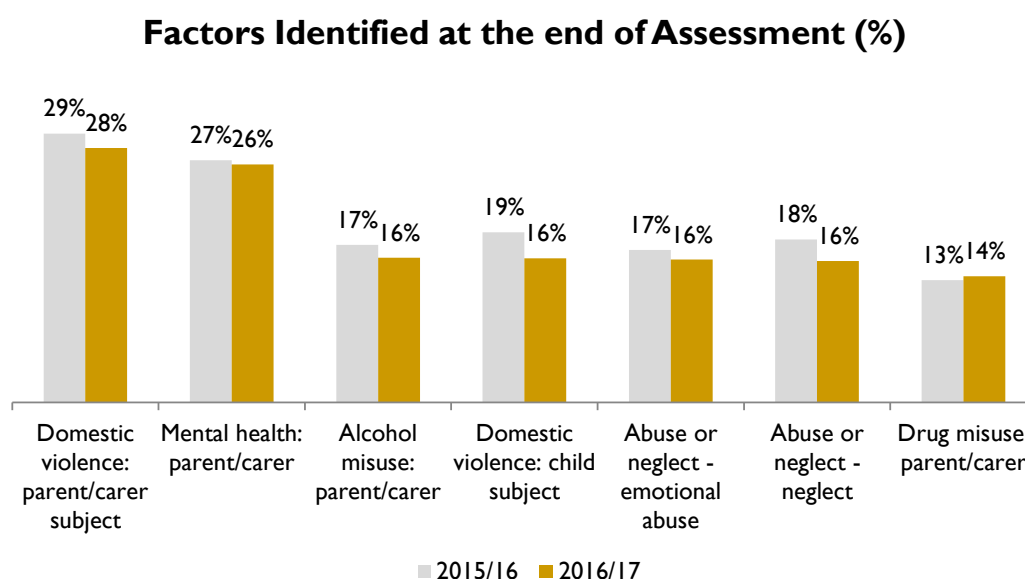
There has been a decrease in the proportion of children subject of a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time this year, from 18.8% in April 2016 to 16.4% in March 2017. This proportion is just below the national (17.9%) and statistical neighbours' (16.6%) averages for 2015-2016.

An improved reporting process has been introduced to provide managers with a bi-monthly report that identifies children that have been subject of a child protection plan for 15 months. This enables managers to rigorously review cases to reduce drift and help ensure that planned work is focused to reduce risk factors and identify appropriate exit strategies. Staffordshire CSC will monitor the impact of this revised process and will be required provide an assurance report to the SSCB Performance Management Subgroup.

Staffordshire's proportion of child protection reviews in timescale has remained high this year at 97.9% (99.1% in 2015-2016); this is higher than the national (93.7%) and statistical neighbours (94.6%) level.

Risk Factors

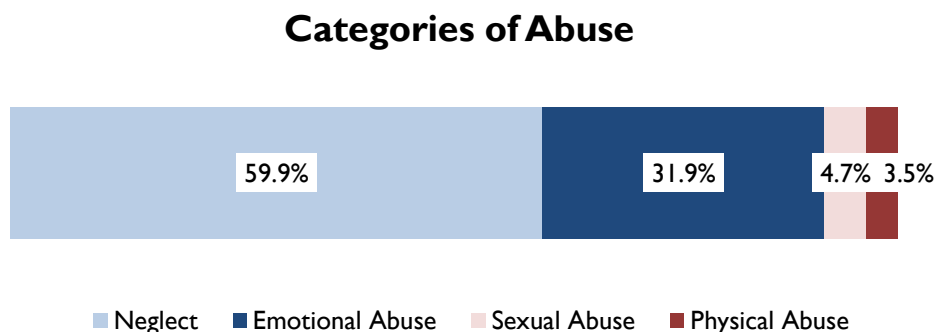
Risk Factors Graph:



The risk factors identified at the end of the single assessment process are submitted by all local authorities for the annual Child in Need Census. The above chart identifies the most frequent factors in Staffordshire over the past two years (national data for 2016-2017 has not yet been published); there has been no significant change since 2015-2016. As a proportion of all assessments completed in the period, the risk factors identified as being the most prevalent related to domestic violence (parent/carer is subject to) - 28%, followed by mental health (parent/carer is subject to) - 26%, alcohol misuse (parent/carer is subject to) – 16%, domestic violence (child subject) – 16%, emotional abuse – 16%, neglect – 16%, and drug misuse (parent/carer is subject to) – 14%. Toxic trio, where domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health issues are identified makes up 8% of assessments.

Categories of Abuse

Child Protection – Categories of Abuse Diagram:

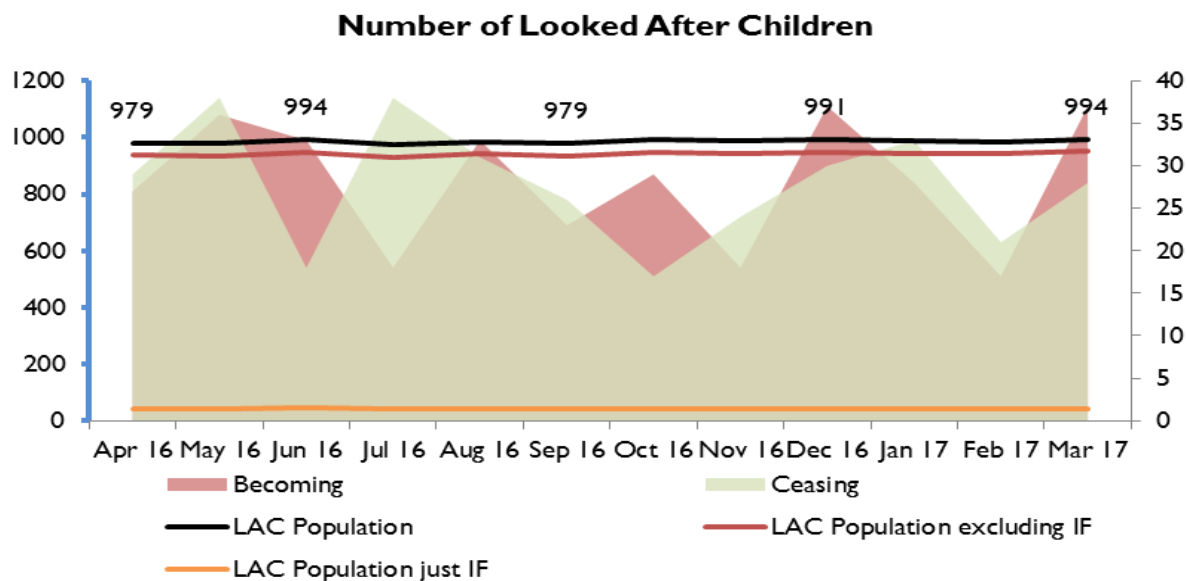


Of the 706 local children and young people becoming subject of a child protection plan in the year, neglect continues to represent the largest category (59.9%); proportions of all categories remain similar to last years' figures. This forms the rationale for neglect being a joint strategic safeguarding children priority for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent LSCBs.

Looked after Children in Staffordshire

'Looked after Children' is the term for children and young people who are in the care of the local authority. They can be placed in care voluntarily by parents /carers who are struggling to cope; they can be unaccompanied asylum seeking children; or children and young people in other circumstances. The local authority and partner agencies will also intervene when a child or young person is at risk of significant harm. Children and young people who come into the care system at a younger age are more likely to go on to be adopted or be made subject of Special Guardianship Orders. In such instances children and young people are able to leave the care system at an early stage; however older children and young people are more likely to remain longer term in the care of the local authority.

Number of Looked After Children Diagram:



The number of children and young people looked after in Staffordshire at 31st March 2017 was 994; an increase of 11 (1.1%) children and young people from the previous year. According to the latest data, the national figures for looked after children have increased by 1.4% but decreased by 1.3% across the West Midlands region. The looked after children population figure for Staffordshire is higher than the average population across our statistical neighbours of 761.

Latest statistics state that the rate of looked after children has risen to 58 per 10,000 from 55 the previous year. This is lower than the national rate of 60. During 2016 – 2017 there were 346 children starting to be looked after, 27 less in comparison to last year's figure of 373. Families First are analysing vulnerable children populations to look at reasons for changes and any pressure points in the system to support strategies to reduce the looked after population when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

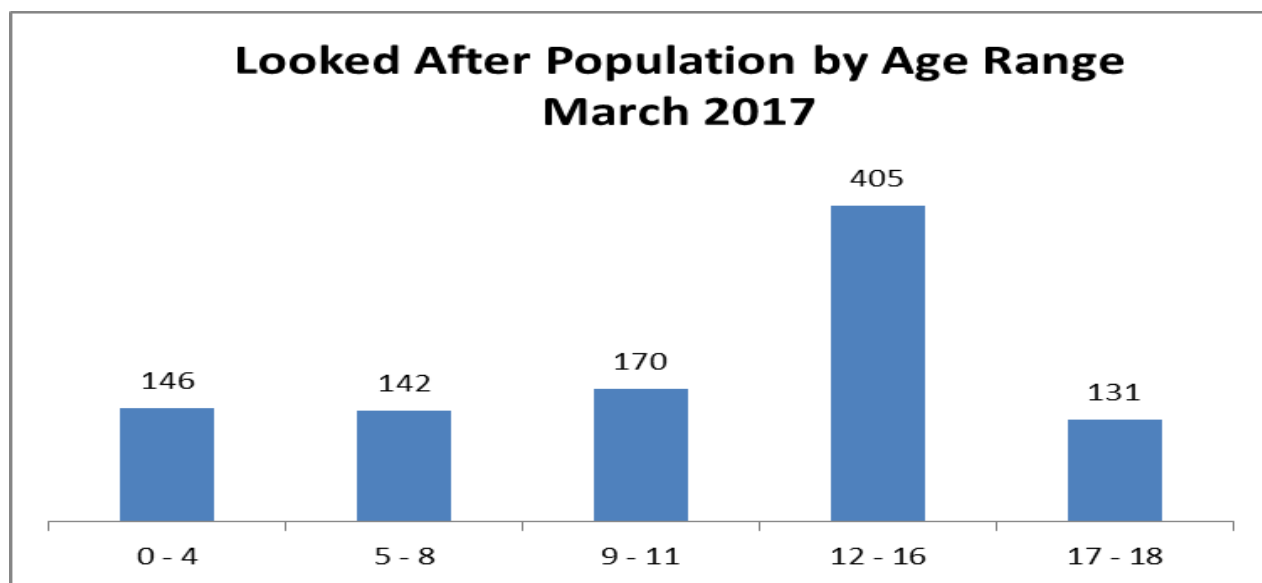
There were 338 children ceasing to be looked after (an increase of 38) compared to the previous year of 331. The main reasons for ceasing are returning home to their parents or guardians (27% which is a 4% increase than last year (23%); adoption (at 12% which is nearly half of last years (22%); and special guardianship (at 13% which is 15% less than last year (28%). Staffordshire's Intensive Prevention Service (IPS) has continued to have a major impact in reducing the number of teenagers coming into care by offering intensive support in their home environment.

The stability of those children in a long term placement of two years or more has increased to 70.5% from 64.8 in the previous year. The CSC short term stability indicator (of three plus placements in twelve months) has decreased to 9.7% (from 12.4% in 2015-2016) – last year's increase was partly due to a number of planned placement moves occurring during this time. A new auditing process has been designed and introduced to monitor placement stability more

closely and help reduce the number of any unplanned placement moves children and young people experience.

Children and young people in care are subject to Statutory Reviews in a prescribed timescale. The first review must be undertaken within twenty days, followed by a subsequent review at three months and every six months thereafter. Keeping Staffordshire’s looked after children safe and achieving their potential is a key part of the local authority’s corporate parenting responsibilities, with the Independent Chairs service having a pivotal role in supporting this. The majority of looked after child reviews during 2016-2017 (94.8%) were held on time and in accordance with national guidance; this figure is an increase from last year (90.4%).

Looked After Children by Age Range:



From an age perspective the largest increase in looked after children was in the 12 - 16 year age cohort which has risen from 386 children and young people in 2016 to 405 children in 2017. Whilst there was an increase in the 9 – 11 year age cohort (10) a fall was recorded in the numbers of Looked After Children aged 0 - 4 and 5 - 8 (10 and 18 less respectively), as well as those aged 17 - 18 (10).

Placement type and location

The vast majority of looked after children 604 (60.8%) are in foster placements, which is a slight increase on last year’s figure of 592 (60.2%). Staffordshire has 91 (9.2%) children and young people in residential placements, a decrease of 14 in comparison to figures as at March 2016.

At the end of March 2017, 320 looked after children were in placements outside the Local Authority area (32.2%) which is a 2.4% increase from figures obtained at March 2016 (274).

When a decision is made by the local authority to place a looked after child outside of its area high priority must be given to the child’s needs. During the year CSC services has continued to lead work on supporting this group of looked after children across multi-agency partners and to resolve any common issues, for example around accessing mental health support for young people placed in other areas.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

The numbers of UASC in Staffordshire has risen from 75 in March 2016 and 86 in March 2017.

The latest figures show that Staffordshire has a higher average than our statistical neighbours (58). Work has been undertaken to review this increase and this has identified a link with the county's proximity to the motorway network.

Children subject to Care Proceedings

The Government implemented the Family Justice Review (FJR) in an attempt to significantly reduce delay in care proceedings concerning children and young people considered to be at serious risk of significant harm. As a result of the FJR, the expectation is that all care proceedings should be completed within twenty-six weeks. In exceptional circumstances, cases can be extended for a further eight weeks.

The number of orders granted in Staffordshire has increased from 347 in 2015-2016 to 402 between April 2016 to March 2017, a rise of 52 (15.9%). Of these 402 orders, over half (55%) were for Interim Care Orders, which is a small increase from last year's where it was 51% of the total orders granted. 31% of orders granted in the year were Full Care orders whilst 14% of them were Placement Orders.

Figures available from the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) on the timeliness of care proceedings reveal that at the end of March 2017, the average duration of care applications in Staffordshire was 31 weeks, an increase of 4 weeks in comparison to last years (27). Nonetheless, Staffordshire's figure for 2016 – 2017 was equal to that of the national average.

Links between the Local Family Justice Board (LFJB) and the Safeguarding Children Board are ensured through our Chair of the Executive Group and other Board partners attending the LFJB.

Adoption

During 2016-2017 the number of children adopted decreased in Staffordshire from 74 to 42.

Nationally the percentage of children leaving care due to adoption has remained the same (16%), however Staffordshire's figure (21%) is higher than average in comparison to our statistical neighbours (19.2%). Staffordshire also recorded the seconded highest increase in comparison to the previous years (an increase of 2%). It is important to note that these figures are run on a three year basis, with the latest figures from 2013 – 2016.

In addition, figures released by the Adoption Leadership Board suggests that the average length of time spent waiting since entering care at the end of March 2017 was 385 days in Staffordshire. According to the latest figures, this is less than the national average (543), the West Midlands average (530) and the average for our statistical neighbours (496) which demonstrates the speed and effectiveness of our adoption system in Staffordshire.

Children with Disabilities

The Children with Disabilities Team (CWD) was working with 490 children and young people at the end of March 2017 who had been assessed as having a social care need linked to their disability. 43 of the disabled children were looked after by the local authority. Where there are

increased concerns or it becomes evident that a parent is unable to safeguard their child from harm Staffordshire's CSC services will investigate the concerns. The child's CWD worker also remains involved throughout.

Staffordshire's Care Leavers

Some of our most vulnerable young people are care leavers who are in need of safeguarding and support as they transition into adulthood. In Staffordshire care leavers are well supported by their personal advisors with the implementation of the 'staying put' policy helping care leavers feel safe where they are living.

From recent analysis undertaken, information indicates that between April 2015 - July 2017, just over half of the children ceasing care in a fostering placement went on to Staying Put (42)

Staffordshire's looked after children service has been working in partnership with 'Sustain' in a new contract, which commenced in April 2015 to focus on extending the age of engagement with young people up to 25 years. This is a very significant development as the previous service end date of 18 years has left some young people vulnerable. A Multi-Agency Complex Cases Panel has been established to look at those cases which don't meet adult safeguarding/protection criteria. A structured programme of preparation for independence is undertaken with young people through the National Youth Advisory Service (NYAS)¹ CD Rom which provides a series of 'Getting Ready for Life' modules.

There is evidence of progress with care leavers in education, training and employment with increasing levels of care leavers going to university; joint work with the Virtual Head teacher and Entrust around post 16 years opportunities and Staffordshire's Foundation to Employment scheme which has received a quality mark. There is still work to do in ensuring that the local authority is investing in care leavers so they can live independent safe lives.

Missing Children

Under section 13 of the Children Act 2004, Staffordshire CSC services along with its statutory partners (such as health, police and education services) are required to have in place arrangements to ensure that our statutory functions are discharged to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes planning to prevent children from going missing; including assessing any risks, analysing data for patterns and trends associated with particular concerns and risks and taking a proactive approach to reduce missing episodes or to protect children when they do go missing.

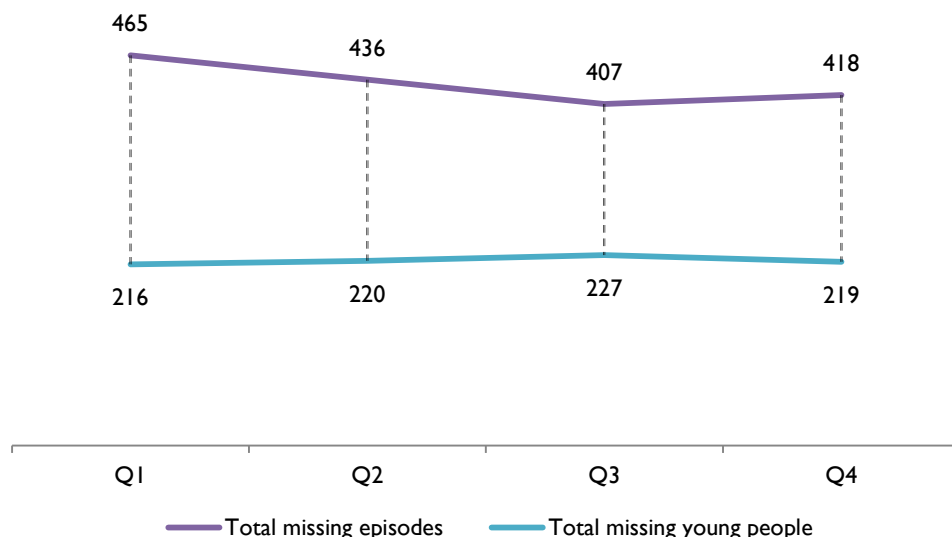
As part of the framework to safeguard children, a joint protocol between Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Authorities and Staffordshire Police is in place for those children who go missing from home or care.

The Strategic Lead for Looked after Children continues to chair the Strategic Missing Children Board that works to a clear action plan. A Missing Children Operational Group also focuses on learning and trends across the county in respect of for example the child / young person, their placement, locations, the reason for the missing episode and any associated risk factors.

^{1 1} The NYAS CD rom is a series of modules which young people work through with their foster / residential carers on issues such as budgeting, being a good tenant etc. in preparation for when they have to live on their own.

These multi-agency meetings help to ensure a focus on these vulnerable groups of children and young people. In addition strong information sharing links have been established between CSE and children missing from education.

Missing Children Versus Missing Episodes



During 2016/2017, 882 young people went missing from home and care, with a total of 1726 missing episodes. Numbers of young people going missing have remained stable over the period, however the number of missing episodes has reduced by 47 from quarter one to year end. The majority of young people going missing (74%) have had previous missing episodes.

Young people going missing have increased by 37% compared to last year, however, missing episodes have only increased by 15 episodes since 2015/2016. This increase may be explained as more cases are actually being reported, rather than an actual increase in children going missing.

The average number of children and young people missing per quarter is 220, with just over a third being other local authority looked after children placed in Staffordshire. 41% (707) of missing episodes are from Independent Care Homes, of those episodes from these homes, 68% are from Other Local Authorities. Another 40% (695) missing episodes are from Home and 10% of missing episodes were from Foster Care provision.

The children and young people repeatedly missing are all known to CSC services and for this particular cohort, there is a high correlation between their missing episodes and vulnerabilities associated with child sexual exploitation, youth offending, learning difficulties or disabilities and problems within the school environment.

There is a continuing trend of females that go missing more than once compared to males and the 15-16 year old age range is the highest cohort.

Most young people went missing from Stafford (17%) with 287 episodes; however in Staffordshire Moorland there were more missing episodes (323), but slightly less young people. This is in line with last year's reporting, where the number of missing episodes in Staffordshire

Moorlands was highest. South Staffordshire and Lichfield remain the areas where young people and episodes reporting have been the lowest.

The local authority is continuing to work in partnership with Staffordshire Police to target hot spot locations, particular children's homes and foster carers experiencing high levels of call-out incidents. A Care Pack has been circulated to Independent Care Homes and Foster Carers to support them with managing children going missing who are in their care.

There is also an improved recording process on CSC ICT systems around the missing episode and return interview; this helps to ensure that the local authority and social workers have the relevant information needed to safeguard children and young people. Monthly and quarterly performance reporting systems are in place to monitor demand, manage risk, timescale compliance and to provide general insight into local themes.

Brighter Futures were commissioned for a twelve month pilot in Staffordshire Moorlands, Newcastle and Stafford up to the end of August 2017. Families First employed dedicated Return Interview Workers to target the remaining District/Borough areas. Improvements have been made in relation to notifications from other local authorities placing children and young people in Staffordshire; a revised notification form and letters setting out expectations has been implemented.

Over the last twelve months the local authority has strengthened the focus around missing children from care and home, particularly around the return interview process and performance management arrangements. On average, over the year, a total of 80% of return interviews are undertaken for children that go missing; 57% are held within 72 hours. It is often difficult to conduct the interview meeting within the 72 hour guideline when young people have gone missing from home and therefore, having to rely on the cooperation of the family/young person making themselves available.

The reasons given for young people going missing are consistent with reasons reported in previous years; 'to be with friend' was the most common reason given, followed by 'no apparent reason'. Other reasons provided include coping mechanism, unsettled at home, substance misuse, boredom, confrontation and family ties.

Three cohorts of the most prolific missing young people have been reviewed by the Operational Missing Group. Findings reveal that, although risks, push and pull factors have remained static across the three cohorts, there have been changes in the characteristics of the young people.

The proportions of young people with a current Youth Justice Order at the time of their missing episodes has increased over the three cohorts. Whilst there were changes in the seriousness of offences and orders, violent offences were the most prevalent across all cohorts. Proportions of young people with fixed term exclusions in the previous 12 months have increased over the cohorts, however, this was not seen for permanent exclusions. Levels of special educational need were much higher in the second cohort than the other two. Across the three cohorts, most young people with identified special educational needs were being supported below the level of an Education Health and Care Plan. In the second cohort there were a number of young people who self-harmed and/or had been detained under the Mental Health Act. Similar levels were not seen in the other two cohorts.

The Staffordshire Voice Project undertook some consultation with young people. The session covered what support information could be offered to young people who go missing, reasons why young people might go missing, what makes young people feel safe and what traits a support worker should have to work with young people who go missing. Young people suggested that having a list of contact numbers when they feel like running away again (including ChildLine) ,a top tips information sheet, including reasons or misunderstandings that are the cause of running away may prove useful. Having a buddy, mentor or advocate who has been through the same or similar situation who could empathise with their situation could also help. The information provided will be used by the local authority when commissioning new Missing Services/Workers.

Young people reported feeling safe when they knew someone cared about them, that they have a good relationship with their carer/s and time is taken to make a bond so they can talk openly about any worries. Ensuring that placement matching is right and that where possible children are placed with siblings or that good contact is maintained when they're not.

The main focus for the coming year will be to embed the arrangements for the newly commissioned Service for Missing Children and Child Sexual Exploitation Service to ensure consistent quality provision across the County for supporting children and young people.

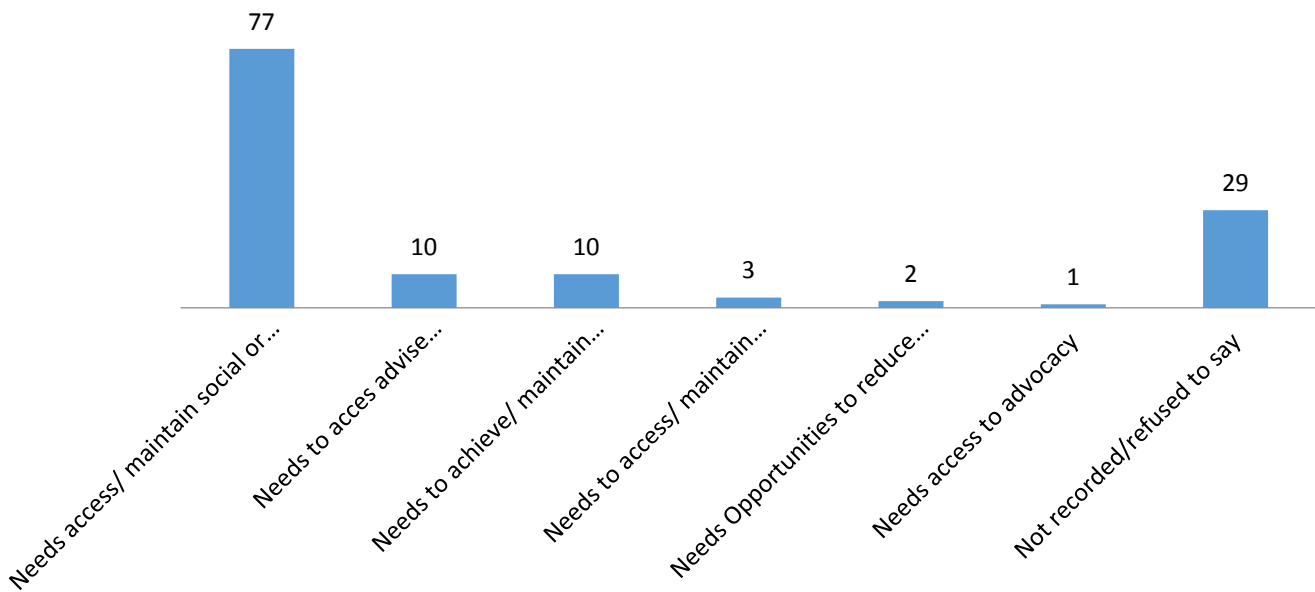
Young Carers

Young carers are children and young people aged from 5 to 18 years who provide regular or on-going care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances. A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care given and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical well-being or educational achievement and life chances.

New legislation under the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 came into force in April 2015 where all young carers are entitled to an assessment of their needs from the local authority. From October 1st 2015 Staffordshire County Council has a commissioned and appointed a service to manage, co-ordinate and provide an integrated Carers Hub.

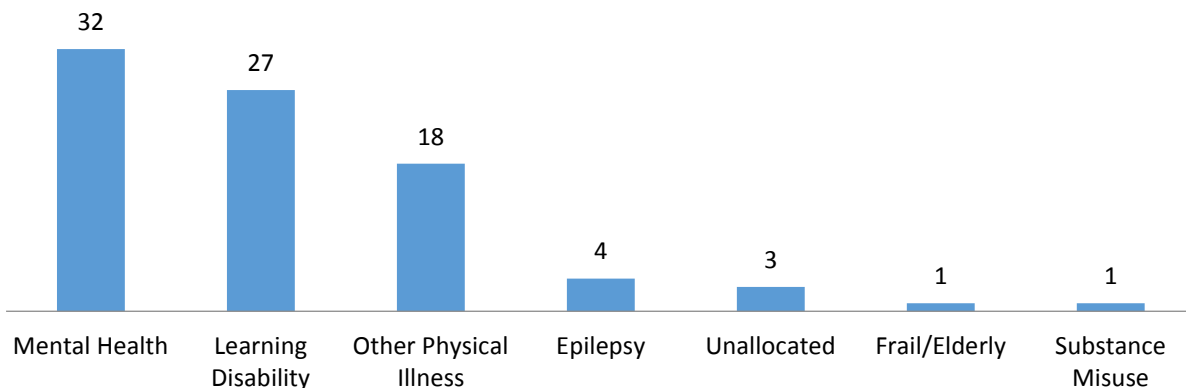
The Hub received 132 referrals during 2016/2017, 18 are 5-10 years old, 101 are 10-15 years old and 13 that are 15-18 years old. The majority of the young carers were female.

Young Carers By Need



The majority of young carers were supported to access and maintain social or leisure activities.

Carers By Presenting Issue



The above information shows the number of carers by presenting issue, showing that for the majority this was caring for someone with a physical illness, with another 45% due to either mental health issues or learning disabilities.

Private Fostering

A child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, a person with parental responsibility or a close relative for twenty-eight days or more is privately fostered.

At the end of March 2017, there were 15 children and young people who were reported to be living in private fostering arrangements. This is a decrease in the previous year (when 20 children and young people were identified).

The main age range for those children living in private fostering arrangements was between 12-15 years and the majority gender of the children referred was predominantly males. In respect of the ethnicity of the children it is evidenced that half of the children privately fostered in Staffordshire during this annual period were from the UK, with the rest of the children originating from Asia, Europe, Caribbean and Africa.

It is evident that private fostering arrangements continue to be a grey area, due to individuals and other agencies outside of the local authority remaining unclear about what constitutes as a `private fostering arrangement` and not making a referral to CSC services. It is recognised that this is an area that will continue to require ongoing improvements if we are to increase the number of notifications received.

Whilst Staffordshire has met the minimum requirement for responding to notifications, there are areas that require improvement, particularly in respect of the timeliness of initial actions, visits and ongoing statutory visits in accordance with DfE minimum standards. This is a key area for continued improvement during 2017-2018.

Raising awareness

Staffordshire's Private Fostering Communication Strategy was initiated in 2012 following additional direction from the Department for Education. The Communication action plan was reviewed in June 2016 and February 2017. The following actions were completed between April 2016 – March 2017:

- Internal campaign undertaken to key stakeholders via increased activity on the website including links to the new leaflets for Private Fostering.
- Private Fostering posters were devised for schools and other agencies.
- Private Fostering leaflets, posters and explanatory letters were sent to an extensive list of schools (Inc.; private and language schools), guardianship agencies, AEGIS whom many guardianship agencies are a member of, faith groups and GP surgeries.
- Information about Private Fostering was published in the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Newsletter.
- A day in the life of a social worker managing Private Fostering cases is posted on Staffordshire's webpage for Private Fostering.
- Feedback from a private foster carer was uploaded onto the website to evidence `what Private Fostering has meant for them` and the support they received from Staffordshire County Council, which supported the placement to be successful.
- SSCB continue to raise awareness with social workers, health and education professionals. Leaflets are also provided and a power point presentation devised to enable all professionals to understand their roles/responsibilities regarding notifying the First Response Team of Private Fostering arrangements.
- The Family & Friends Team continue to attend area social work team meetings across the county, to raise awareness of private fostering and the requirements.
- A schools mailshot was also undertaken whereby information about Private Fostering was sent via the e-bag to all schools, nurseries, colleges and academies within Staffordshire totalling approximately 400 schools.
- An article about Private Fostering was put on Staffordshire's website to signpost people to the relevant contact points.
- Messages were put on Facebook/Twitter to promote Private Fostering.
- The Private Fostering webpage was updated on the Care4child website

- Partnership work continues with bordering Local Authorities, their education admissions department and schools in respect of identifying children who may be living in Private Fostering arrangements and who cross borders.
- Close joined up working has been undertaken with Immigration, Border Agency, Health, Education and HM Revenue and Customs in respect of specific cases whereby trafficking was of concern (discussed in further detail below).
- Data collection continues to be maintained through updating and maintaining an internal spreadsheet and through the implementation of the IT system (Care Director), which captures all private fostering arrangements and key data.

The SSCB continues to play a vital role in helping protect children who are privately fostered, exercising leadership and raising awareness of the requirements and issues around private fostering. A full analysis of activity in Staffordshire during 2016-2017 is available in the Staffordshire CSC Private Fostering Annual Report 2016-2017.

Challenges

Despite the significant activities to identify children and young people living within private fostering the numbers identified remain low. It is widely believed that there is under reporting around this issue.

Allegations against a Person in a Position of Trust – Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The SSCB has a duty to ensure that there are effective inter agency procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children and that all allegations are investigated in accordance with those procedures.

The Staffordshire LADO arrangements continue to be delivered via a generic duty desk based service, co-located with Staffordshire's FRT and embedded within the MASH environment. All referrals or requests for advice, irrespective of workforce sector, are routed initially via FRT which allows for the capture of basic information prior to passing directly to the duty LADO. The duty desk's embedded location within the MASH allows for real time conversations with Staffordshire Police and other MASH located agencies (eg DBS ; Adult Safeguarding Team) which greatly enhances the provision of well-informed advice and decision making.

Staffordshire LADO continues to benefit from a very effective working relationship with Staffordshire Police's 'Common Law Police Disclosure Unit' (previously known as the Notifiable Occupations Scheme) which is also located within the MASH environment. This provides for additional robustness in identifying adults potentially employed within the children's workforce who have been detained in Police custody on suspicion of offences which may (or may not) reflect possible risk to children. This working relationship assists greatly in tracking early activities with individuals who have chosen not to advise their employer of events which may require an assessment of risk.

The LADO location within the MASH also allows checks to be made and information gathered in support of case management activities within the fostering service, for example, when risk features indicate the need for rapid assessment of peripheral adults.

The critical statistical data relevant for the 2016-2017 reporting period indicates a continuing trend of increasing referral activity. In terms of formally managed cases, 440 referrals (a 24%

increase on 2015-2016) were processed in addition to 367 enquiries for advice which fell short of the formal threshold criteria.

The majority of referrals (61%) emerge from three professional occupations which reflect the nature of the often intense daily interactions between children and adults. These are teachers and lecturers (91 referrals and 21% of total number of referrals received); foster carers (66 and 15% of all referrals received); and residential care workers (112 and 25% of the referrals).

Very effective working relationships continue to be maintained with regional Ofsted personnel. Frequent dialogue is undertaken between Staffordshire LADO and Ofsted regulatory inspectors in support of their inspection and monitoring activities, and there are a number of examples of robust joint working in dealing with organisations whose services and employees have caused concern. Staffordshire LADO was a founder member of the National LADO Network which was launched in June 2016 and continues to make active contribution within the West Midlands Regional LADO Network.

It is appropriate to acknowledge that a significant amount of work is undertaken by the LADO and Specialist Safeguarding Unit's in relation to allegations emerging from independent children's homes reflecting work around children who are placed in Staffordshire by other local authorities.

There are approximately 100 independent children's homes in our local authority area, predominantly providing care for 'out of area' children. There continues to be some frustration with the inconsistent approach taken by placing local authorities in terms of the wide variation in their commitment and support to the allegations management process. This seems to be related to a small number of local authorities who appear to have acute recruitment challenges which leads to lack of consistency and communication breakdowns between the placing authority and the host authority.

To help to address these issues the Staffordshire LADO meets with Ofsted on regular basis to raise local observations and concerns. The placing authorities are monitored to help to identify those who do not notify Staffordshire about a child or young person placed in our area and representations are made to escalate these concerns as required. Clear messages and information is also provided to all local children's homes managers and staff about their roles and responsibilities and the use of advocacy services is encouraged where needed to promote a child's best interests. Staffordshire CSC services are also clear within their looked after children documentation about the expectations they have on placing social workers and their responsibilities to support their children irrespective of geographical location.

During 2017-2018 the Staffordshire LADO service will continue to facilitate bespoke training events for the schools sector and providers of services to children workforce in respect of 'allegations management'. This is being offered within the SSCB's wider training catalogue and feedback from events continues to be overwhelmingly positive.

Independent Chairperson Annual Report

The Staffordshire CSC Independent Chairperson (IC) Service consists of 19 Independent Chairs and 2 Business Managers and the Principal Social Worker has operational lead for the IC service. The chairs undertake the dual function of chairing meetings for looked after children and those who are subject to child protection plans. All chairs are co-located within the social

work safeguarding teams and are well positioned to have an overview of both corporate parenting and child protection in Staffordshire. The following offers key messages from the IC Service for 2016-2017:

Key Messages about Looked After Children:

- The looked after children population for 2016/2017 has ranged from 979 to 994.
- 346 Children have entered the care system in the last 12 months, a decrease of 42 since 2015-2016.
- The majority of children and young people who started to be looked after were aged 0-4 years which equates to 31.1% of those children becoming looked after
- The majority of looked after children (86) achieved permanency through a return home to parents which is consistent with last year, with a marginal increase of 2.
- The number of children placed more than 20 miles from their home is 230 (23.1%) which is a decrease of 17 children from last year.

Key Messages about Child Protection:

- A total of 766 children were considered at Initial Child Protection Conference, a decrease of 86 children (-10.1%) compared with 2015-2016 (852 children)
- A total of 1251 children were considered at Child Protection Review Conference, a decrease of 182 children (-12.7%) compared with 2015-2016 (1433 children)
- 88.9% of children presented at Initial Child Protection Conference were within timescales, above the proportion in 2015-2016 (86.6%)
- 97.9% of children presented at Child Protection Review Conference were within timescales, just below the proportion in 2015-2016 (99.4%)
- Of the CP plans starting during 2016-2017; 59.9% had an initial category of neglect, 31.9% emotional, 4.7% sexual abuse, and 3.5% physical abuse.

Children with a Disability

Research and inspection indicate that nationally disabled children face an increased risk of abuse or neglect yet they are underrepresented in safeguarding systems. It is believed this is because there are greater barriers in identifying and responding to abused disabled children than for non-disabled children. During 2016-2017 Staffordshire had 24 children with a disability who were the subjects of Child Protection Plans, this is a decrease of 15 children from 2015-2016. At the end of March 2017, there were 490 children and young people being provided services by Staffordshire's Children's with Disabilities service.

To help with this, during 2016-2017, the IC Service has an identified practice champion for children with disabilities which is in addition to 4 IROs who specialise in chairing looked after statutory care plan reviews for children with disabilities. In light of national inspection process changes, there are plans for the 4 IROs to deliver a presentation to their IC colleagues regarding legislation, research and policy for children with disabilities. Furthermore the service has already started to build positive working relationships with the Children's with Disabilities service which will inform future practice regarding child protection and care planning.

Children and Young People's Involvement

Children and young people's participation in their review is a fundamental aspect of the review process and in Staffordshire a high percentage of children and young people continue to

participate by attending and/or actively contributing to their review. The IROs continue to use a number of different mediums to promote children's participation which includes the following:

- Viewpoint as a tool for promoting feedback and capturing children's wishes and feelings
- Meeting children and young people before/in between the reviews ensuring they have opportunities to talk to their IRO in private before the review meeting.
- Conducting the review in 2 or more parts
- Promoting the use of advocacy for every looked after child
- Ensuring reviews are child friendly with some IROs using a social pedagogic approach in the child's review
- A successful pilot of MOMO – Mind Of My Own
- The IROs create opportunities for children and young people to chair all or part of their reviews. This is really empowering and remains an ongoing area for improvement and development
- Feedback from each child or young person is also sought following their review by giving them a child friendly questionnaire. Of the 188 questionnaires completed this year **95% of children felt listened to and 95% of children reported everything was explained well.**
- The use of advocacy is the dominant method of participation for children and young people in their child protection conferences with 47.15% using this mode of participation. This demonstrates the Local Authority's commitment to promoting the use of advocacy for children who are subject to child protection planning.

During 2016-2017 the service has:

- Undertaken a full revision of the current dispute resolution policy to facilitate the implementation of a solution focused approach to resolution. This will increase the chair's 'footprint' on the child's file.
- Continued to work collaboratively with the Children's Voice Project and Children in Care Council in order to strengthen their voice within their meetings and increase their participation in the process.
- Launched an information pack for parents and carers of looked after children.
- Developed SMARTER child protection and dual process conference agendas in addition to developing specific agendas for statutory care plan reviews which focus on key priorities for looked after children.
- Completed planned audits.
- Held themed discussions in supervision to capture local trends in single agency and multi-agency practice.
- Helped to ensure that practitioner and children and young people feedback continues to inform and shape service development.

THE KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES





CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

At a joint meeting of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Boards in September 2014 it was agreed that the strategic priorities for 2015-2018 would be common to and owned by both Boards. The development sessions held by the partnership Boards and the Executive Groups to examine and assess the national and local drivers set out within the Single Improvement Plan identified the need to tackle child sexual abuse as a priority.

The strategic priorities for 2015-2018 have been developed following self-assessments, external scrutiny and evaluation. High profile national serious case reviews have identified child sexual abuse as a significant risk factor for children regardless of where they live in the country. It is also known that children who are missing from home or from residential care settings are particularly vulnerable to the risk of internal trafficking and child sexual abuse.

The Safeguarding Children Boards have developed a cross agency approach to tackling child sexual abuse in all its forms and produced an overarching Child Sexual Abuse strategy. The strategy sets out the vision, commitment and approach of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Boards.

This strategy advocates that the best way to tackle the sexual abuse of children is through effective, co-ordinated, inter agency and partnership working to a clear and coherent plan, doing everything possible to prevent child sexual abuse and as well ensuring that there is a swift and proportionate response with practical and tailored support provided to children and young people unfortunate to become victims It has the following four key elements:

- **Prepare** – Provide strong leadership, effective systems and working with partners to tackle child sexual abuse
- **Prevention** – Raising awareness of child sexual abuse amongst young people, parents, carers, the community and potential perpetrators and provide help at the earliest opportunity. This includes building resilience with families and partners to understand and act together in preventing this form of abuse.
- **Protect** - Safeguard young people by providing targeted support in order to achieve good outcomes for those who are at risk of or already victims of exploitation and support professionals to do so
- **Pursue** – Disrupt, arrest and prosecute offenders wherever possible and appropriate

The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Boards have formed a Child Sexual Abuse Forum (CSAF) the key purpose of which is to share information; initiate action to implement the above mentioned Child Sexual Abuse strategy; provide mutual challenge to connected partners and to ensure that work towards implementation is given continual priority. The CSAF reports to the respective Safeguarding Children Boards. The governance structure showing links to connected partnership groups is at **Appendix 2** on page 75.

Whilst CSAF was established largely in response to the emerging national and local profile of CSE, triggered by a series of high profile cases being highlighted in the media, local safeguarding partners wanted to ensure that there were robust safeguarding arrangements in place for all children and young people at risk of sexual abuse in whatever form the abuse may be. The Safeguarding Children Boards decided that CSAF would have a remit to consider all forms of sexual abuse and determined the following themes for specific focus:

- Child Sexual Exploitation –
- Children Missing (from home, education and care)
- Child Trafficking – Modern Day Slavery
- Intra Familial Abuse
- Youth Violence
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

A task-and-finish group for each of these sub themes was formed with a brief to produce a report for CSAF

Progress and Achievements

Throughout the year the SSCB has monitored and sought assurances from connected partners as to the actions being taken on a single agency and multi-agency basis to tackle child sexual abuse and the effectiveness of arrangements. The following sections provide an outline of what has been done and achieved during the year in relation to each of the elements of the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy.

PREPARE

- Multi agency work to tackle child sexual abuse is well established across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent with a network of engaged partners.
- Each of the strategic leads from the above themed task groups attend the quarterly CSAF meetings to update on progress and to respond to questions seeking assurances as to the existence of and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. It is not the purpose of this annual report to list all of the progress made through this activity but it is documented as part of CSAF meeting papers.
- The updates to CSAF cover what is currently in place structurally and operationally and the associated governance arrangements; cross-cutting equality and vulnerability issues; training needs in the form of an analysis; considerations for education; mental health; public health; local gaps and concerns; key messages for service commissioners; outcomes to be achieved
- The employment of the CSE Coordinator, who plays an important role in driving the CSE agenda across Staffordshire and Staffordshire, has been reviewed and extended to January 2018 with funding provided by the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- The revised CSE strategy was approved in June 2016 and the associated action plan has been reconfigured to align with the CSE outcomes framework.
- The CSE Risk Factor Matrix Tool used by practitioners to inform their assessment of children and young people where there is a concern about child sexual exploitation has been revised. The tool aims to assist professionals in determining the right help at the right time for children at risk.

- A peer review process for the child sexual abuse cases referred through the Sexual Assault Referral Centre provides assurance on the quality of medical examinations and opinions of paediatricians. This approach supports succession planning through the training of doctors. (UHNM)
- The Chair of the CSE Commissioning Group attends CSAF to update on needs-led service-wide commissioning priorities. Updates from the specialist provider delivering service to children at risk of or being sexually exploited are also provided to the SSCB.
- Quarterly reporting arrangements have been established for the mutual sharing and scrutiny of performance reports between the SSCB and the Safe and Strong Select Committee.
- The NSPCC has a Service Centre in Staffordshire offering post-abuse therapeutic work, harmful sexualised behaviour and work with mothers who are linked to sexual offenders. The NSPCC has reviewed its approach to service delivery and has undertaken to work with four local authorities nationally, on the delivery of services based around child sexual abuse or multiple deprivation (mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse). Staffordshire was identified as a partner of choice with a focus on child sexual abuse.

PREVENTION

There has been a major focus by safeguarding partners on raising awareness of and preventing child sexual abuse. Below is a summary of some key developments and achievements:

- Staffordshire Police working together with the two local authorities has formed a multi-agency Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Team. The Prevention Team has been delivering CSE awareness and internet safety advice to a range of diverse communities and local businesses. The team offers support and education to families, potential victims and their families and will also work with perpetrators and potential perpetrators.
- Through an Early Intervention approach, funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner and Home Office has provided over 2000 books on the theme of vulnerability that have been used alongside lesson plans in Staffordshire primary schools as part of a prevention strategy (Staffordshire Police)
- Early Help services are delivered through 11 Children Centres where supporting materials are available for children and young people, parents, professionals, and local communities. The services are helping to raise awareness of the risks, recognise the signs that a child may be vulnerable to, or subject to, abuse and to initiate appropriate interventions. Partners are encouraged to co-deliver from the sites to ensure parents and children receive holistic support within familiar settings that are easily accessible.
- Barnardo's has provided free factsheets for parents, carers, professionals and children and young people raising awareness of what it means, how to recognise it, what to do, how to ask for help.
- CSE Awareness training - A basic awareness course targets everyone employed and engaged in school settings including lunchtime supervisors, cleaners, site supervisors, governors etc. The training content includes: - what is Child Sexual Exploitation; the national and local picture; who is at risk; models of exploitation; recognising signs and indicators; why report it and who to. Members of staff that required more in-depth training were signposted to appropriate SCB courses.
- The Safeguarding Education Officer co-delivered training to specifically raise awareness across the education sector. Since January 2015, 433 schools have signed up to the SSCB Level 1 Licence agreement so they can deliver training which includes CSE

Awareness Training with a Train the Trainer programme to ensure quality and consistency.

- Level 1 safeguarding children training is delivered or accessed by all school staff and these training programmes contain an input on the signs and indicators of CSE along with local profile information.
- The new taxi and private hire licensing policy came into effect in September 2016 and requires all existing drivers to have attended a Level 1 safeguarding children course within six months of the new policy start date. All new drivers have to attend the safeguarding training before they can submit their application. The focus of the training is on recognising abuse and neglect, communication, disability, hate crime, how to report concerns, the law on consent, CSE with an underlying message that taxi drivers and passenger assistants are the 'eyes and ears of the community'.
- Local Authority Licensing Officers, working with Children's Social Care, have responded swiftly to allegations against individuals working with children and assisted the Local Authority Designated Officer. In some cases taxi drivers have appeared before the Licensing Committee and had their licences revoked due to safeguarding concerns.
- There is a designated YOS Manager who attends the CSE panel and receives referrals and co-ordinates information sharing
- There is an established multi agency management of risk forum which co-ordinates plans to reduce risks for all cases of children and young people where there are concerns for their vulnerability and welfare.
- If there are significant safeguarding incidents these are reported to the Youth Justice Board as required and overseen by the Safeguarding Serious Case Review sub group.

Awareness-raising campaigns

A local Child Sexual Exploitation Campaign was delivered from October 2015 to April 2016 that followed on from the nationally co-ordinated Safer Internet Day and CSE Awareness Day. There were three parts to the local campaign:

'Professionals' campaign- To raise awareness and understanding of CSE, the associated warning signs, sexting and associated risks among all relevant professions and partner agencies to support a proactive approach to identify CSE, safeguard the child and ensure all allegations are investigated.

'Say no to sexting' – A campaign developed as a result of internet safety research with young people. Sexting was discovered as the main digital and online risk factor. The campaign group worked with young people to design a simple solution to tackle perceptions and the likelihood of repeat sexting.

'Know About CSE' – A campaign to raise general public, parents and young persons' awareness of the signs of CSE, how to report concerns and to increase reporting. In addition, to support young people to know what is and what is not a safe and healthy relationship, and to recognise targeting and grooming.

A website www.knowaboutcse.co.uk was also developed to help young people, parents and carers, and practitioners to access information on being targeted and groomed, spotting the signs of CSE and reporting concerns. A particular emphasis was placed on challenging and changing

the mind set of young people with regards to sexting being 'Ok' through the 'Say No to Sexting' campaign.

The six month campaign used social media (Email; Facebook; Twitter) and had a significant reach across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. The campaign's partnership with schools across the city and county has enabled parents to be provided with information about resources related to CSE, including the website. The full evaluation report was reported to the Child Sexual Abuse Forum in July 2016. The key headlines identified that:

- 87% of professionals who had accessed training in Staffordshire were now confident about spotting the warning signs of a child being sexually exploited (an increase of over 27%)
- There was a 14% increase in the number of parents who feel confident in recognising the signs of CSE.
- There was a 17% increase in number of parents who feel confident about how to report CSE concerns.

In addition to the above the number of contacts made to the dedicated Staffordshire County Council telephone number recognised as being from members of the public showed a large increase when comparing the campaign period to the same month in the previous year with 74 calls compared to 36 calls in March 2015. Although there is a general upward trend this year, calls received in the campaign period were significantly higher when compared to the month before (54) and the month after (36). Staffordshire Police had a 12% increase in recorded CSE related sexual offences over the course of the campaign period.

It has been agreed that a further awareness raising campaign to build on the positive outcomes of the previous activity should be developed for 2017-18 to be arranged by the CSE co-ordinator.

PROTECT

- All Children's Social Care teams are responsible for working with children and young people at risk of being sexually exploited. Due to the demands associated with an increasing number of joint police investigations, additional resources have been deployed in the form of a team to work on these specific investigations.
- A senior practitioner with specialist skills in supporting young people who have experienced CSE is permanently in post with Families First and there is an agreement that they are based there Staffordshire Police Child Exploitation Team at Police Headquarters 1 day per week and supports practitioners across Families First, sometimes taking an active role supporting the safeguarding teams with complex abuse cases and more complicated high risk CSE cases.
- CSE Panel meetings are operational and are chaired by safeguarding County Managers held bi monthly.
- The Panels cover Staffordshire's eight districts and have been split into four separate panels as below:
 - Newcastle-Under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands
 - East Staffordshire (Uttoxeter and Burton-On-Trent)
 - Cannock and South Staffordshire (inc Stafford)

- Tamworth and Lichfield (including Burntwood)

- For CSE Panels that took place between April 2016 – April 2017, 221 young people were identified as being victims of child sexual exploitation at low, medium and high level (as per the CSE Risk Factor Matrix), and have been discussed at County-wide multi-agency Panels. This is a 66% increase from the number that was discussed over the full year of 2015/2016 (133). This increase is expected given the increased awareness amongst children, parents and professionals and ongoing workforce development amongst professionals, care homes and foster carers.
- For those young persons discussed more than once at the panels strategic oversight is given by a social care senior manager

No. of young People	No. of Times discussed at Panel
54	1
61	2
49	3
26	4
18	5
8	6
5	7

- The majority (90%) of young people identified as being at risk from child sexual exploitation at the initial Panel were girls, with over half (56%) aged 14 and 15 years old. The majority (82%) of young people discussed at Panel are of White British background.
- The number of males discussed at last year’s CSE panels was 12 equalling 9% and this year the number of males discussed this year was 23 or 10.4%.
- 38% of young people were identified as Children in Need and 33% had an Early Help Assessment, 20% were looked after children and 10% were subject to a child protection plan.
- The Staffordshire County Council Transport Safeguarding Policy, training and assessment now provides the framework to ensure Staffordshire’s contracted services protect both passengers and contractors from any unknown risks and enable vulnerable persons who may be at risk to be identified. The policy and operational delivery is consistent with current legislative requirements, best practice and serious case review investigations in other local authority areas and were developed in partnership with licencing authorities, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent CSE professionals and contractors to maintain safeguarding standards and achieve the best possible outcomes in delivering transport services for vulnerable young people.
- The assessment work on existing operators and contracted personnel is complete with attention now focused to evolve training and processes based on case studies, legislative changes and Staffordshire’s experience. As of May 2017 the following work had been completed

- Number of Applicants 2618
- Number SCC trained 1878
- Applicants with DBS traces 467
- Refusals 71
- Appeals 23

- During 2016/17 Brighter Futures have worked on a commissioned basis to conduct return interviews with children and young people who go missing. When CSE is identified as linked to a missing episode, the young person is referred to Base 58 (this arrangement will be amended later in 2017 when revised commissioning arrangements will be introduced).
- The NSPCC has provided the 'Letting the Future In' service to help children who have been sexually abused. The impact of the service has been assessed. Almost three-quarters (73%) of children aged 8 and over who completed 6 months of 'Letting the Future In' had severe emotional difficulties at the start. After 6 months this dropped to less than half (46%). For those children remaining in the service after 1 year there was promising evidence of positive change. At the start 89% were experiencing severe levels of distress but after a year this had dropped to less than half (40%).
- Staffordshire Police has continued to use prevention orders where it is appropriate to do so. Between April 2016 and March 2017 a total of 16 Child Abduction Notices were served in Staffordshire in relation to CSE. Two CSE related Sexual Harm Prevention Orders' and one Sexual Risk Order have been granted in Staffordshire in the last 12 months.

PURSUE

- Staffordshire Police has three teams responding to the issue of CSE. These are the Preventing CSE Team; the 'On-street' Child Exploitation Team (CET) which is a team of officers and a social worker who work closely with partner agencies in tackling protracted investigations of Child Sexual Exploitation by groups or gangs as well as individual perpetrators; and the 'Online' Child Exploitation Team who work on Operation Safenet that tackles all aspects of online child sexual abuse.
- The officers on the Operation Safenet Team are both proactive and reactive in dealing with child sexual exploitation online. Proactive actions have included targeting groups or individuals who are seeking to distribute indecent images of children and young people online and those who are grooming children online with a view to meeting them to commit child sexual offences. The team works closely with regional, national and international law enforcement agencies sharing intelligence to safeguard victims and prosecute offenders.

In time since Operation Safenet was formed in July 2015 to March 2017 there has been significant enforcement activity in offences related to child sexual exploitation in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent:

- 172 warrants have been issued
- 149 arrests have been made
- 122 people charged with 538 charges
- 41 voluntary interviews (where arrest was not required)
- 218 children safeguarded

Challenges

Whilst the Board is eager to make progress on this priority it is also cognisant that this is the second year of a three years strategic plan and it will take time for the work for the obvious activity to demonstrate evidence of improved outcomes.

There are some issues around strategic alignment with other related activity. Discussions have taken place and continue with the Safer Staffordshire Strategic Board where there is overlapping activity.

Strategic partnerships without clear co-ordination can cause governance and leadership confusion in respect of local priorities. Therefore it is paramount that all partner agencies are fully sighted on individual areas of strength and areas for development relating to those key strategic priorities in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families.



NEGLECT

The need for this priority was based on national learning and local evidence which highlighted neglect as a recurring theme in serious case reviews and is known to be the most prevalent form of abuse for children subject of a child protection plan in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Around half of all children looked after by the Local Authority are known to have experienced harm as a result of neglect. Arising from the knowledge of local factors the Safeguarding Children Boards have a particular focus on the impact of parental behaviours and influences that can often lead to neglect of the welfare and safety of children and young people specifically, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol misuse and parental mental ill-health. In combination these factors are known locally as the 'toxic trio'.

The Safeguarding Children Boards have resolved to develop and co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to improve partnership effectiveness in tackling neglect. This approach has a specific focus on the impact that parental behaviours have on the welfare and safety of children and young people. Working to the Safeguarding Children Boards strategy the aim is to ensure there is both early recognition of neglect and through strong multi-agency leadership and governance improve agency responses to children and young people affected by neglect.

The following sections illustrate the focus of the SCB on the toxic trio with an outline of what has been undertaken in partnership during the year to tackle neglect, the challenges that have been highlighted and are being addressed and concluding with a summary of further actions to be undertaken in 2017/18.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

There is extensive evidence illustrating the harm caused to children and young people who live with domestic abuse. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 extended the definition of harm to include 'impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another'. The term 'living with domestic abuse' includes:

- Children who are currently living where there are incidents of domestic abuse, or where there is risk of domestic abuse, taking place
- Children seeing or hearing domestic abuse outside of their home
- Children witnessing the effects of domestic abuse on others.

The reported number of Domestic Abuse crimes in Staffordshire follow:-

2015/16 = 7,141

2016/17 = 8,890

Number difference = 1,749
% change = 24% increase

The number of incidents for Domestic Abuse cases in Staffordshire are:-

2015/16 = 14,406
2016/17 = 14,997

Number difference = 591
% change = 4% increase

The risks of harm to children who are exposed either directly or indirectly to domestic abuse are known to be significant but the gathering of data in relation to the number of children affected by domestic abuse can in some instances be difficult to capture. The SCB has actively encouraged a focus on improving understanding of the associated issues.

In Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) provides an integrated approach where a number of agencies work together in one place, sharing information and making collaborative decisions to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable children and adults so that any required interventions can be put into place at the earliest opportunity.

Through this joint working a number of issues for improvement have been identified. From a toxic trio perspective there is currently no facility or ability in MASH to bring together a domestic incident with mental health and substance misuse information. Whilst there is ongoing work to bring mental health data into the MASH more work needs to be done to include substance misuse information.

On a more positive theme through the implementation of a new MASH operating model, the previous domestic abuse incident backlogs have been removed and there is timely assessment of risk and information sharing. There is evidence that the overall benefit is being felt at the front line with practitioner feedback suggesting that this information is leading to improved decision making.

It is also a benefit that the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) team are based within the MASH. Cases that are assessed in the MASH are often sent direct to MARAC enabling a swift response.

The MARAC caseload for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire combined for the comparative periods April 2015 to March 2016 and April 2016 to March 2017 is shown below:-

	April 2015 – March 2016	April 2016 – March 2017
Total Number of Cases	539	920
Female Victims	512	859
Male Victims	27	61
Children Involved	609	1012

Throughout the year the focus of the SCB has been on seeking assurances from connected partner organisations that:

- domestic abuse cases are screened in a timely manner and children in these settings are identified and referred to statutory services
- children who live with domestic abuse experience a child-centred approach from all professionals and the risks to them and their needs are assessed effectively and responded to appropriately
- professionals and support staff see incidents through the eyes of the child and are trained, confident and knowledgeable to understand the impact of domestic abuse
- children living with domestic abuse receive the right help and protection because application of appropriate thresholds, effective information sharing and timely intervention take place
- the risk of harm to children is reduced through the identification and assessment of the risks that perpetrators and adult offenders pose
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) - support the protection of children through developing effective action plans, timely sharing of information, and assessment of risks to children
- the impact of domestic abuse on children is reduced because they, their families and perpetrators can access a sufficient range of commissioned local services

Activity and outcomes

More children and victims are being referred to the MARAC forum and whilst there is no hard evidence of improving outcomes there can be a conclusion drawn that such people are safer than they would have been using the previous operating model.

The SCB has sought and been given assurances from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) that in all cases where children and young people were involved, either directly within the family, or as associated children to those families i.e. grandchildren, children with ex-partners etc. discussions have been held in the MASH; their information appropriately shared with Children's Social Care; and in the majority of cases, a formal assessment has resulted to ensure that the children are properly safeguarded.

ARCH received 62 referrals of male perpetrators within families in the Staffordshire area. The actual number of men who received a service was 83 (some men having support carried over from previous year). The support offered in this area includes first and second suitability assessments, the 30-week Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP) and post-group support for those men who completed the programme. During the year ARCH reported a 66% completion rate for those men who were assessed as being suitable for a behaviour-change programme.

A new 'child safe tool' has been produced for GP practices. This highlights domestic abuse between parents as a potential risk factor to trigger a risk analysis of potential children at risk. (Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group)

Each Local Policing Team has a Vulnerability Team with dedicated staff and officers who have received specific training to deal with the complexities around domestic abuse. The Vulnerability Teams have forged strong links with the MASH ensuring consistency and effectiveness in the practical application of policy and procedures.

As at 31 March 2017 the Troubled Families programme, (known in Staffordshire as Building Resilient Families and Communities- BRFC) had identified and supported 827 families with children experiencing, or at risk of experiencing domestic abuse.

During the year the Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency policy and procedure in relation to Domestic Abuse has been reviewed confirming alignment between the respective the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent documents.

The Safeguarding Children Board E-learning Level 1 child protection training and the SCB multi-agency Level 2 Working Together Training both include awareness on domestic abuse and its impact on children who are either living with domestic abuse, see or hear domestic abuse outside of their home or who witness domestic abuse on others.

The Level 3 SCB multi agency training delivered by Staffordshire Women's Aid in relation to children and young people experiencing domestic abuse has been revised to be more targeted around referral pathways and assessment of risk and need.

Staffordshire Police continue to provide training and professional development around legislation for all staff and officers up to the rank of Chief Inspector. In addition to providing training on Coercion and Control there have been inputs from partner organisations about support and specific 'tools' that officers and police staff can use to help victims of domestic abuse. The training includes the "Voice of a Victim", whereby a victim of domestic abuse spoke of her personal experience in a way that conveyed the impact on her that provided a stimulus for professional reflection.

Over 120 dental practice staff attended domestic abuse awareness training, with follow up support to practices provided and a dedicated referral pathway put in place.

The learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has been shared with practitioners through a series of briefings, the common themes of which are mental ill health, substance misuse and domestic abuse.

Routine Enquiry about Adversity in Childhood Experiences (REACH) Pilot

In recognition of the potential harm caused to children and young people who experience domestic abuse during the year Staffordshire has been piloting an initiative Routine Enquiry about Adversity in Childhood (REACH). The pilot involves 3 key organisations ARCH, Lifeline and Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC). The intention of the programme is during individual assessments to ask young people about any adverse experiences that they may have suffered and to respond appropriately with planned interventions which in the longer term will reduce the likelihood of adverse impact of domestic abuse on later health and wellbeing.

Implementing routine enquiry requires that each connected organisation has a commitment to understanding the impact of adversity on their client. Good systems and processes will ensure that routine enquiry becomes embedded in each organisation and becomes a part of everyday working practice. Good practice will ensure that professionals feel confident and supported in

enquiring which in the longer term will enable more focussed interventions and potentially reduce the number of repeated interventions required by many individuals.

Routine enquiry supports solution focussed approaches which incorporated with an emphasis on resilience can potentially increase the likelihood of successful longer term health and wellbeing outcomes. Funding for the entire project is supported by a number of partners. The Directorate of Public Health and Adult Social Care are funding the initial training and follow up support and the evaluation is funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Staffordshire.

It is expected that the pilot will be delivered and evaluated during 2017/18, supported by wider awareness training around attachment, adversity and emotional wellbeing for 1,000 practitioners across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire funded through the Violence and Vulnerability Working Group.

Challenges

- There remains a high prevalence of domestic abuse within Staffordshire and a significant proportion occurs in households with children. It is a challenge to meet the increasing demands on services.
- Breaking the cycle in families with a history of inter-generational domestic abuse through strengthened family relationships / approaches
- To strengthen capacity in support for young people who have been affected by domestic abuse.
- To ensure the joint commissioning of domestic abuse services across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is consistent, of high quality and meets the needs of victims, perpetrators and their children / families
- Partnership arrangements around domestic abuse have evolved and must be fully embedded
- To improve the existing information sharing process with schools to ensure that they are made aware of any of their children who are living in a household where a domestic incident has occurred
- Domestic abuse information in relation to people who are vulnerable is not routinely shared with GPs which is an identified risk. Through the 'Project Doing More' a universal health team is proposed but there are challenges for local Clinical Commissioning Groups in the delivery of this approach. Discussions are ongoing to find a way to cover the risk.
- More action is needed to bring about a wider understanding amongst professionals of the root causes / key determinants of domestic abuse and the impact on children and young people
- A coordinated approach to training for front-line professionals on identifying and referring domestic abuse

Priorities for Domestic Abuse 2017/18

Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner are jointly commissioning domestic abuse services across the City Council and County Council areas under joint contracts that are designed to provide a consistent high quality service that will:

- be more responsive to the needs of victims and their children

- promote early identification and referral
- have a greater focus on prevention
- address perpetrator behaviours

It is intended that the new contracts will commence in autumn 2018.

A revision of the domestic abuse system, including the MARAC process, is underway, with 2 pilots due to commence in 2017 in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. The anticipated benefits include a more dynamic approach, fewer meetings for professionals and swifter activity arising from greater coordination of services and by reducing duplication.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Public Health England collects data nationally on the number of drug and alcohol service users who are parents. In 2011 it was estimated that around one third of people receiving treatment were parents and had children living with them.

Whilst the extent to which difficulties impact on parenting varies enormously, In terms of assessing the impact of problem drug and alcohol misuse on children and young people there is limited evidence. However, it is clear from a variety of sources that alcohol misuse by parents can result in violence and risks of physical harm to children and young people and as referenced in other parts of this strategy there are overlaps with the so called ‘toxic trio’ of Domestic Abuse and Parental Mental ill Health.

The focus of the Safeguarding Children Boards has been on seeking information from connected partners in relation to:

- Confirming with commissioners and providers what data and information should be received from children and drug and alcohol services for inclusion in the Safeguarding Board performance data set.
- Assurances that commissioners of drug and alcohol services have systems in place to monitor the extent to which providers of those services meet their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children
- The number of adults receiving specialised drug and alcohol services who are parents or carers; in order to develop an understanding of local needs relating to children affected by parental substance misuse and to seek assurances that children and young people are being supported.
- Assurances that senior managers from connected partners have arrangements in place for supervision and oversight and evaluate the quality of joint working through analysis of referrals and case file audits with findings reported to the LSCB
- Assurances that senior managers and practitioners across all connected partner agencies services are made aware of learning from Serious Case Reviews relevant to drug and alcohol misuse
- Assurances that all children’s and adults services practitioners working with families affected by drug and alcohol problems have the competence and confidence in identifying the impact of these difficulties on the child or young person
- Assurances that commissioners of drug and alcohol services ensure that the role of adult drug and alcohol services in safeguarding is set out explicitly in all relevant tender

documents and in contracts.

Activity and progress

During the year the SCB has strengthened links with the Responsible Authorities Group. The SCB Independent Chair attended the Responsible Authorities Group to discuss mutual accountabilities and reporting arrangements in relation to tackling substance misuse by parents of children and young people at risk of harm. Agreements were made for the Commissioning Manager of the Safer City Partnership to provide quarterly updates to SCB meetings.

The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2016 – 2020 and action plan, that includes a focus on prevention and early intervention for children and young people at risk, was approved by connected partners at the Responsible Authorities Group and with lead member support was also approved by Staffordshire County Council Cabinet.

A Tier one and Tier two young people's drug and alcohol service has been developed which works specifically with young people vulnerable to hidden harm.

A Tier three young people's drug and alcohol service has been commissioned and is delivered by the same provider of the adult drug and alcohol treatment which brings the added benefits of enhanced information sharing and joint care-planning and is delivered from the intensive prevention service.

Safeguarding policy sets out the standards, strategies and approaches to safeguard vulnerable service users and their children and families.

It was confirmed to the SCB during the year that commissioned drugs and alcohol treatment services are compliant with local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines

The NSPCC interim evaluation report collates findings from questionnaires that children and parents completed at the beginning and end of a support programme. It also includes interviews with some of the children and parents who took part. The findings are used to enhance practice.

The GP child safeguarding audit has been reviewed and asks specifically about considering the impact of drug and alcohol abuse on children residing in the family. (North Staffordshire and Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group).

The Substance Misuse Prevention officers, within the Public Health team (who support schools in the delivery of drug and alcohol education to young people), have extended their offer and have delivered parenting sessions. A dedicated family team supports substance misusing adults with parental responsibilities, individuals affected by a family member, carers, young carers and families.

Challenges

It is estimated that a maximum of only 15% of dependent drinkers (national research) will ever engage in formal treatment. This illustrates to some extent the problems associated with identifying hidden harm.

There are a large number of parents in drug/alcohol treatment who do not have their children living with them (44% vs 27% nationally for drug treatment: 51% vs 33% nationally for alcohol) which can provide some barriers in terms of supporting whole families

A strategically and operationally aligned approach to prevention and early intervention is essential to avoid increased referrals into Children's Social Care and an increase in related overarching health and social problems, including poor wellbeing, poor physical health, antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse.

The Personal and Social Health and Education (PSHE) is fragmented and would benefit from a more structured and better co-ordinated approach

Significant cuts have been made to drug and alcohol treatment service budgets which will impact partner organisations being able to provide a consistent response to families at risk.

There is a need to better equip front line staff with the knowledge and skills to talk to people about drug and alcohol misuse to help them to access support

Plans for 2017/18

The way in which need is recorded by services, and reported by Public Health England is going to change which is anticipated will give a more accurate insight in to service user need, including e.g. mental health and parental status. At present, reports are fixed based on information gained at first assessment when a person may not feel as comfortable sharing accurate information

A pilot in Routine Enquiry in to Adverse Experiences in Childhood (REACH) is to be developed through a range of agencies, including the community drug and alcohol service and the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)

The integrated community drug and alcohol service is scheduled to attend each of the Safeguarding and Support Team meetings to provide a presentation on drug testing arrangements for parents of children open to social care. This will also provide an opportunity for further discussion around joint care-planning and enhanced information sharing.

The focus of the Responsible Authority Group is on enabling more people to become and remain abstinent from substance misuse by providing recovery-focussed treatment and support for dependent drug and alcohol users and increasing the visibility of recovery communities²

PARENTAL MENTAL ILL-HEALTH

Progress to date:

² Recovery communities are connected, cohesive communities of people who are in recovery from addiction to drugs and/or alcohol

In the 2015/16 annual report the Board acknowledged some of the challenges it faced with regards to progress against the requirements set out in the Joint SCB Neglect strategy. The following information provides an update on progress made against those challenges;

- Progress has been made in confirming with commissioners and providers what data and information is required to assist the Board in understanding the profile of parents with mental health needs. The majority of the LSCB data set has now been approved with agreements in place to seek the remaining elements.
- Internal documentation used by the two providers of adult mental health across the county records the details of any children, including names, DOB, other agencies involved and any risks (This includes first time entrants). Regular audit activity provides assurances to the Board that children, where relevant are appropriately safeguarded. NSCHT reported that the recently completed base line case file audit noted good practice in that the majority of details regarding children are being recorded during the assessment process. Care planning for adults continues to be strengthened in relation to including relevant children. To support this the safeguarding training includes a stronger focus on this aspect of care planning
- Those children who are caring for adults with mental health needs are identified and supported as both providers have ensured their staff have had training. Assessment documents include prompts and supervisions with clinical teams encourage discussion around young carers and any potential safeguarding issues.
- Serious case reviews and learning reviews locally have identified parents with mental health issues and as such the providers have included this within their training. This learning also forms part of trust wide internal 'Learning Lessons' programme where learning is shared across the organisation.
- Regular audit activity provides assurances that referral pathways are robust and highlights areas of good practice such as Think Family thus emphasising the golden thread that runs through all safeguarding training delivered.
- Safeguarding training is provided in line with the Intercollegiate document; it focusses on Think Family and considers the risk of compromised parenting if parents have a mental health problem. Training compliance is monitored centrally within the trust; this is reported on monthly through directorate performance reviews and bi-monthly to Quality Committee. NSCHT safeguarding team continue to be sighted on child safeguarding referrals that are made by staff for children living in a household with substance misuse.
- The head of safeguarding /named nurse provides specific safeguarding supervision to staff and in turn receives supervision from the CCG designated nurse.

Plans for 2017/18

To continue to maintain the focus on gathering information and assurances as outlined in the Board Neglect Strategy. It has been identified that the above assurances should be sought in relation to Third Sector mental health provision. The extent to which this already takes place is not known and needs to be examined.

Transition to Adult Care and Support

Young people with ongoing or long-term health or social care needs may be required to transition into adult services. Transition is defined as a purposeful and planned process of supporting young people to move from children's to adults' services.

In April 2015 the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board adopted Transition to Adult Care and Support and this remains a key strategic priority. In recognition of the areas of overlap the Adult Board is supported by both the Stoke-on-Trent and the Staffordshire SCBs in its activities.

Young people with ongoing or long-term health or social care needs may be required to transition into adult services. Transition takes place at a pivotal time in the life of a young person, part of wider cultural and developmental changes that lead them into adulthood; individuals may be experiencing several transitions simultaneously. There is evidence that transition services in health and social care are inconsistent, patchy and varied depending on the condition. A loss of continuity in care can be a disruptive experience, particularly during adolescence, when young people are at an enhanced risk of psychosocial problems.

The transition to adulthood covers every aspect on a young person's life. Supporting disabled young people in their transition to adulthood can be a challenge to service providers. This is because the process must be individual to the needs and aspirations of each young person and local options for disabled young people may vary geographically. Also, more recently, some services have been affected by funding reductions or decommissioning.

Progress and Achievements

Eight cohorts of young people were identified and between January and May 2016 focus groups were held each of which having representation from key connected agencies. These cohorts were:-

- Mental ill-health
- Autism
- Young carers
- Children who offend
- Physical and Learning Disability
- Substance misuse
- Looked after Children (LAC)
- Children in Need

The findings revealed some good practice, for example the Staffordshire multi-agency Transition panel where young people are considered on a case by case basis, and some areas for improvement. The two cohorts of young people for whom transition was likely to be the most challenging were those with lower level autism and those for whom child protection legislation had safeguarded them.

During the period that the focus groups were held the Department of Health (DoH) commissioned the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to develop an evidence-based guideline to improve practice and outcomes for young people using health and social care services and their families and carers. The guideline focuses on young people passing through transition to adult services with health and/or social care needs. The guideline covers young people up to the age of 25 who expect to go through a planned service transition, and proposes a set of high level principles which the Transition working Group considered.

Between January and March 2017 the following proposals were taken to the three Boards and approved:

- Ask Directors of relevant services to agree and sign-up to the high level principles produced at the working group
- Consider and adopt the NICE guidelines and relevant 'Preparing for Adulthood' (PfA) self-audit tools as examples of how to self-audit against good practice
- Ask the Directors of relevant services to arrange for the provision of evidence based assurance with which to demonstrate compliance with good practice and guidance and that the high level principles are being embedded into practice
- Assurance to be delivered to the three local Safeguarding Boards (adults and children) in the third and fourth quarter of 2017/18.

In January 2017 the SSASPB received a referral for consideration of a Safeguarding Adult Review following the death of a young person aged 18 years. In April 2017 it was decided that although the circumstances did not meet the threshold for a SAR, the SAR Sub-Group believed that there may be lessons to learn from reviewing the case. The SAR Sub-Group recommendation of a Multi-Agency Learning Review (MALR) was approved by the SSASPB Independent Chair and subsequently commissioned with transition forming part of the terms of reference. An update will be provided in next year's Annual Report.

The work towards the delivery of the Strategic Priority continues and will be reported upon further in the 2017/18 annual reports of all three safeguarding boards.

EARLY HELP



EARLY HELP

Early Help means: *'...providing support as soon as problems emerge, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan when a child has returned home to their family from care.'*

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015)

It is well recognised amongst safeguarding partners that Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help services in Staffordshire are delivered by the Children and Family Service Directorate and a range of partners, including schools, children centres, through a range of Health settings and the community and voluntary sectors.

The vision for Early Help is that all children and young people in Staffordshire are happy, safe and healthy, inspired and enabled to succeed. For some children this can only be achieved with additional support. Our vision is to make Staffordshire an "Early Help" county by helping families at the earliest point, enabling them to access the right service, at the right time, from the right part of the system.

Governance Arrangements

The overarching governance arrangements for the co-ordination of Early Help in Staffordshire are under the Staffordshire Family Strategic Partnership Board (FSPB). The Safeguarding Children Board has established a scrutiny and challenge role and there is a standing agenda item at quarterly meetings to examine activity and progress and to seek assurances in relation to the quality of assessments and overall management of practice and performance in relation to Early Help.

Activity and progress

During the year April 2016 to March 2017, a total of 4,398 requests for support were received by Local Support Teams. At the end of March 2017 LSTs were actively supporting 2,825 families. There were an additional 946 cases being led by External Agencies and Family Intervention Workers.

The top 3 sources of requests for support were schools, Families First (SSU) and Health (combined total). These 3 sources accounted for 3,044 (69%) of all requests received. The highest number of requests for support came from schools, which were the source in 1,360 (31%) of cases during the year.

Families are assessed to ascertain what support is required to be clear about objectives and also provide the headlines for their action plan. The type of support is grouped into categories which reflect the outcome areas used in the Family Plus Outcomes Star. This tool is used across LSTs (and across all agencies for Building Resilient Families & Communities case work) with families to identify issues and track progress.

The main areas identified for support are:

- Boundaries and Behaviour, specifically the focus of child/young person being disruptive in school or at home
- Education and Learning, specifically Child is Persistently Absent from School

Analysis of the outcomes of the 4,006 cases closed during the year indicates that:

- 65% of cases LST or BRFC objectives were achieved
- 13% of cases were closed because families disengaged or consent was withdrawn
- 13% of cases closed because families engaged with or were referred to another service

Audit analysis was completed on a quarterly basis during the year, as well as a full audit analysis report, a one page summary of Learning from Audits was completed each quarter to provide feedback and focus to auditors and Local Support Team staff. The audit picture across the full year was one of improvements in the quality of assessments and action plans completed, and of improvements in the quality of interventions and timely management of cases. Areas for continued focus and development include ensuring that all professionals involved with children and families contribute to assessments, and ensuring that appropriate agencies are actively involved in the family plan.

Whilst good progress has been made with Early Help in many situations there have also been challenges, some of which are yet to be resolved, as summarised below.

Challenges

- Need to actively encourage the involvement of children, young people and their parents/carers to ensure their voice is captured and is used to influence and reshape service provision.
- Need to continue to improve partner engagement at the Early Help Strategy Meetings to strengthen the partnership approach to Early Help
- To understand and address the barriers preventing partner agencies initiating Early Helps.
- Raise confidence with partner agencies to lead Early Help Assessments.
- To establish robust processes which enable the sharing of partnership data and embed clear communication pathways to enable both the needs and strengths of families to be better understood by everyone.
- To strengthen the reporting of outcomes from the EHA and include the links to Domestic Abuse, substance misuse and parental mental ill health
- To understand why a relatively high number of school exclusions appear to have had no Early Help Intervention.
- There is a shortage of appropriate parenting support available, particularly for the 11-18 years age groups.
- To continue to improve the quality of Early Help Assessments so that they are more outcome-focused.

Actions for 2017/18

- Review the Early Help Strategy for formal approval of the Family Strategic Partnership Board
- Develop, implement and embed a solution focused methodology for all Early Help Professionals
- Develop specific forums for – children and young people and parents and carers to seek feedback on their experiences and effectiveness of the services and support they have received.
- Improve the analysis of data to measure the effectiveness of Early Help on statutory services particularly referrals to the Safeguarding Referral Team, Children in Need plans and Child Protection Plans.

THE WORK OF THE SUB-GROUPS



Communication

A key part of the Safeguarding Children Board functions is to communicate to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so.

During 2016-17 the following activity has been undertaken:

- Circulated extensively amongst the wider safeguarding partnership regular briefings informing of procedure/policy/strategies updates, changes within organisations and local safeguarding events.
- Circulated a quarterly newsletter across partnerships to raise practitioner awareness around safeguarding issues such as progress on SCB priorities, learning from case file reviews training opportunities, highlighting specific safeguarding issues and promoting local campaigns.
- Updated on a monthly basis, to ensure that it remains a useful resource, the Board website accessed through <https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Home.aspx> which is the key electronic platform for the publicly accessible site that provides a substantial amount of information about safeguarding duties, good practice, and how to access help and support.
- Worked with young people from the Voice Project to improve the layout and content of the Children and Young People's section of the Board website.
- Updated information leaflets covering a wide range of topics. These have been widely distributed and are also available on the Board website.
- There have been a number of campaigns to raise the profile of safeguarding awareness in the community. The "Know about CSE" campaign continued into 2016-17 in partnership with Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board, and the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner. The Board website focuses on raising awareness amongst young people, their families and professionals around CSE. The website provides details of local and national helplines and support services. This campaign was evaluated during 2016 indicating that the communication objectives had been achieved.
- The SSCB supported Staffordshire County Council's Fostering Service with their campaign to promote awareness around private fostering. This was widely distributed to schools and included in the Section 175 audit process.

Policy and Procedures Sub-group

LSCBs have a statutory duty to develop policies and procedures for the safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children in the area of the authority. In recognition of the benefits of collaborating to share expertise to ensure consistency in approaches and efficient use of time the Staffordshire and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Boards decided to form a shared Policies and Procedures Subgroup in 2014. The subgroup fulfils the following core functions:

- To produce and develop legislatively compliant inter-agency policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people which promote consistent and effective evidence based practice across organisations working with children; and

- Focus on meeting the needs of children and young people via multi-agency working in order to improve their outcomes.
- Policies and procedures are available to practitioners on the SCB website: <https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Professionals/Procedures/Procedures.aspx>

Progress and Achievements

Where it has been possible, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's inter-agency policies and procedures have been aligned to provide synergy to those professionals who work across our borders. Listed below are the policies, procedures and guidance documents that have been formally reviewed, updated and ratified by the SCB during this year:

- The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families
- Legal Framework
- Information Sharing Guidance
- Joint Glossary of Terms and Acronyms
- Organisational Whistle Blowing Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children
- Responding to concerns about unborn children
- Concealed Pregnancies
- Private Fostering
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Children who display Sexually Harmful Behaviour
- Child Neglect
- Neglect Threshold Matrix Appendix 1
- Fabricated/Induced Illness
- Joint SCB learning and Development Framework

In order for all partner agencies to engage in the review of documentation, a decision was taken in January 2017 that future reviews would take place bi-annually unless there was a change in legislation or learning from serious case reviews or changes to local processes that required. In such situations those documents would be amended or revised prior to bi-annual.

Alongside the above activity the Safeguarding Board managers have been engaging with an innovation project that is examining the feasibility of a single set of policies for all safeguarding partners in the West Midlands region. Whilst there are clearly some advantages to such a collaborative approach there is also a need to consider the local procedures that are usually required to take account of the different geographical and political considerations associated with wider partnership arrangements.

At the time of compiling this report, the SCB is monitoring developments but has not made any formal commitments to become part of the arrangements as there are cost and procurement implications beyond the above considerations for the SCBs that participate.

Challenges

- The work of this particular group is demanding of time as all policies and procedures are compiled and revised by frontline staff from partner agencies. Whilst this work doesn't

impact directly on the SCB budget, clearly there is an expectation that all partner agencies will nominate staff to attend the bi-monthly meetings and undertake the required duties as required.

- To ensure policies and procedures are relevant and up to date through the most cost effective methods.

Serious Case Review Sub-group

The key focus of the sub- group is on the learning from national and local Serious Case Reviews (SCR) as well as local cases not reaching the criteria for a SCR but from which it is likely lessons can be learned.

All serious incidents are carefully considered and all key decisions as to whether a review should be initiated are ratified by the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board.

Activity and outcomes

- Two Scoping Panels were held in 2016-17. In one of the cases the criteria for a Serious Case Reviews was not met; however the panel recommended that there could be important learning from this case. The Independent Chair agreed that the case did not meet the threshold for a Serious Case Review but that a multi-agency learning review should be undertaken. The learning review will be completed in 2017-18. The second case did meet the criteria for a formal Serious Case Review. An Independent Reviewer was appointed and the Serious Case Review will be concluded during 2017-2018.
- One Serious Case Review was published in January 2017. The learning from this Serious Case Review was shared with partner agencies. The action plan is being monitored by the serious case review sub-group.
- The sub-group considers the progress of action plans at each meeting providing transparency and a focus on delivery.
- Lessons learned from the learning reviews have been cascaded to a wide circulation including through the SCB newsletter for a wider local circulation.
- Learning from the Staffordshire reviews has been shared with the Staffordshire SCB to identify common themes and consider any impact.

Challenges

Ensuring that the learning from Serious Case Reviews and learning reviews is meaningful and acted upon by frontline practitioners with evidence of improvement in practice.

Plans for 2017-18

The Wood Review on the role of functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards has advocated the discontinuation of Serious Case Reviews in favour of an independent body at national level to oversee a new national learning framework for inquiries into child deaths and cases where children have experienced serious harm. The new arrangements will cover local child safeguarding practice reviews, to identify any improvements that should be made by persons in the area to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The anticipated changes in arrangements will be linked to the provisions of the Children and Social Work Bill that is to be enacted through legislation in 2017.

Performance Sub-group

Since April 2016 the Performance Sub-group has been joined with Stoke-on-Trent SCB reflecting the focus on a common performance framework and joint strategic priorities. The analysis of the effectiveness in safeguarding children produced in conjunction with the Performance sub-group is covered at pages 11 to 28 above. The key findings from the Section 11 conducted during the year are summarised below.

The Full Section 11 Audit was carried out with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards' partner agencies this year. The Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 sets out Section 11 standards that organisations need to comply with.

Partners participating in the Full Section 11 for 2016/2017 include Children's Social Care Services, Commissioning Services for both Local Authorities, Borough/District councils, NHS organisations, Staffordshire & Stoke National Probation Service, Werrington Young Offender Institution, Youth Offending Teams and other non-statutory organisations.

There was an excellent response from all Board partners contributing to the audit, with the majority of agencies assessing themselves as either meeting standards or meeting them with recommendations for improvement; no agency reported not meeting any of the standards. A wide range of supporting examples were given and evidence of partners identifying follow-up actions were given where judgements were 'met with recommendations for improvement'.

There is clear evidence of a nominated lead representation from each agency, with evidence of designated professionals, attendance and contribution from the majority of partner agencies is good. Most partners are able to demonstrate ways in which information from the Boards is cascaded to staff across organisations via emails, on the intranet, included in training events and team meetings as standard agenda items.

Commissioners for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire social care identified that there was a need to improve commissioning tendering and implementation of safeguarding standards with all commissioned services as well as better monitoring of contracts. The Police Service and Borough & District Councils have noted areas of further work to ensure that accountability structures and staff understanding met this standard fully.

Many areas of good practice were identified during the review of information for having a culture of listening to children and young people and using information to develop Services; especially by both social care providers and health partners, detailing various innovative ways of gaining service user feedback, using it to evaluate provision and incorporate into service development.

Information Sharing protocols were in place for all partners and there was good staff awareness of how to share information with partners to ensure that children and young people were kept safe and to allow a full account of circumstances to ensure the right provision and support was offered.

The majority of partners have Safer Recruitment, Allegations against Staff who work with children and Whistleblowing policies in place and the relevant officers have received appropriate training, DBS and other checks take place before staff are appointed. South and North CCG clusters are reviewing policies currently to ensure they are fit for purpose. Partners have appropriately qualified officers to manage and have oversight of allegations against people working with children and have good links with both Local Authorities' LADOs.

A comprehensive Training Strategy/Plan is in place for most agencies with evidence of appropriate staff accessing mandatory level 1 & 2 safeguarding training or there are plans in place to ensure that this is consistent throughout services with training refreshed every three years in most organisations. Partners identified multi-agency priority training for 2017/18 that reflect the LSCBs' priorities including CSE, Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse, Early Help, Toxic Trio, Mental Health, Adolescence Health. This information will be useful in planning multi-agency training sessions and developing new resources.

There is reporting of auditing activity taking place that should reassure the Board that service areas are working towards safeguarding children and young people. Staff surveys, inspection findings, internal audit and staff feedback demonstrates a good understanding of awareness of safeguarding responsibilities and priority issues, who to contact in their organisations for advice and guidance and making appropriate referrals to Children's Social Care Services and Early Help is evident for most agencies. However, an improved understanding of safeguarding thresholds for some agencies to ensure all agencies are referring safeguarding concerns at the appropriate level is required as identified in Stoke-on-Trent Children's Social Care return.

The newly devised audit template has provided a more focused, streamlined response avoiding duplication of evidence and allowing partners more useful judgement criteria. Positive feedback about the S11 template and process has been received via the Performance Sub Group.

Actions for 2017/18

During the following year, actions provided for improvement where standards weren't fully met will be followed up to ascertain progress made to ensure full compliance. The Peer Review Section 11 will take place during 2017/18 and the findings from the full S11 and Board priorities will be used to select the focus of this review.

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

It is the responsibility of Local Safeguarding Children Boards to ensure that a review of every death of a child normally resident in their area is undertaken by a Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP). In line with best practice that CDOPs responsible for reviewing deaths from larger populations are better able to identify significant recurrent contributory factors the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Boards decided to form a shared and jointly funded CDOP in 2008.

The overall purpose of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Child Death Overview Panel is to undertake a multi-disciplinary review of child deaths, in order to understand how and why children die and use the findings to take action to prevent other deaths and improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our children.

- There have been 50 deaths of children and young people who lived in Staffordshire during 2016/17 which is a slight increase from the 48 children and young people who died in 2015/16.
- From the 50 deaths in 2016/17, 27 deaths were unexpected compared to 15 deaths in 2015/16. An increase in sudden and unexpected deaths was also seen in Stoke-on-Trent. National statistics for the period have yet to be released.

Reviewed Deaths during this period:

As part of its functions, the CDOP is required to categorise the preventability of a death by considering whether any factors may have contributed to the death of the child and if so, whether these could be “modified” to reduce the risk of future child deaths.

- The CDOP panel met 5 times during the period and 54 deaths were reviewed by the CDOP across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire and of these 46 were local to Staffordshire.
- From the 54 deaths CDOP identified modifiable factors in 15. Of the 46 deaths in Staffordshire modifiable factors were recorded in 13.

7 of the 15 deaths with modifiable factors related to children under one year old. Of these 4 were associated with sleeping arrangements; 4 were associated with adult smoking. Within Staffordshire 10 children were male, and 38% of the population resided in North Staffordshire.

CDOP Activity and Achievements

Throughout 2016/17 CDOP has continued to work with partners locally and nationally to continue to improve child safety, child welfare and develop the functions and effectiveness of CDOP. The following is a summary of the key activity and achievements:

- Continued to promote the Safe Sleeping Campaign to raise awareness amongst parents, carers and practitioners of the importance of safe sleeping arrangements. Safe sleep workshops were held to continue to promote to staff the safe sleep assessment, more are organised for autumn 2017.
- The CDOP developed Safety Booklet entitled ‘Protect Your Little Bundle... From Birth and Beyond’ to raise awareness of potential hazards in and around the home and to prevent unintentional injuries to babies and children continues to be circulated and promoted Funding has been provided by Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Public Health for the next 2-4 years, and supplies this year were bolstered by a private donation of booklets.
- The CDOP designed and circulated 14 issues of the CDOP newsletters – now entitled ‘Child



Health and Safety Newsletter', to appeal to a wider audience. This is designed to raise awareness of key issues and campaigns including Drowning Prevention, Button Battery Awareness, Asthma and Immunisations and Breastfeeding.

- We continue to be members of the National Network of CDOPs to share best practice, exchange information and collectively support each other to prevent and reduce child deaths
- Re-invigoration of West Midlands Regional CDOP Network to share local best practice, collation of statistical information and regional working groups to look at shared procedures, learning development days.
- Local Sudden Unexplained Death in Infancy and Childhood guidance (SUDIC) has been updated and reviewed in line with the recent publication of the Royal College of Pathologist SUDIC Guidance
- Continued to work with regional colleagues in the palliative care network to improve the quality of Advanced Care Plans to support children and young people and their families in circumstances where there are life limiting conditions. The Staffordshire Child and Family Bereavement Alliance held a study day at Staffordshire Police Headquarters, support by the CDOP in November 2016.

Objectives for 2017/18

The 2017/18 objectives are contained in the CDOP Business Plan (2017/18). The Plan builds on the strong joint arrangements between the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Boards and the key areas of focus are summarised below.

- To conduct a formal evaluation of the CDOP Safety Booklet to include feedback from practitioners and service users
- To support another Staffordshire Child and Family Bereavement Alliance study day
- To respond to demand from professionals to continue to deliver Safer Sleep Awareness Workshops to support multi-agency practitioners in their role in preventing and reducing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. To continue to promote safer sleeping and update and promote awareness material
- To build on the work undertaken with Staffordshire Police to enhance their response to investigating child deaths and use this learning to inform a refresh procedures.
- To monitor progress against the Asthma Thematic Review Action Plan to ensure that improvements in service delivery are operationalised and sustained
- To continue to develop the support available to bereaved families through working with local services to develop support networks (the 'Star Café') at venues across the county
- To respond to recommendations relevant to CDOP from the national review of Safeguarding Children Boards

The CDOP Annual Report 2016/17 is available from the respective Safeguarding Children Board websites using the following links:

- Stoke-on-Trent: www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk
- Staffordshire: www.staffsscb.org.uk

The Wood Review on the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards has advocated changes in the arrangements pertaining to the Child Death Overview processes. The details will be available for consultation later in 2017.

Workforce Development and Training Sub-group:

Core Business Objectives 16-17 (within SSCB Training Strategy 16-19):

- Our role is to ensure strategic overview of the quality and provision of single and multi-agency training. We will ensure that training needs of all partner agencies are met within the context of local and national policy and procedural developments. Also training needs arising from SCR's, audit and Inspection.
- All SSCB training shall incorporate learning in respect of issues relating to equality and diversity.
- Support the management of the SSCB training pool through recruitments, training and monitoring.
- Evaluate the impact of training on practice, organisations procedures, and outcomes for children, young people and their families.

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Aboutus/Annual-Reports/Annual-Reports.aspx>

Delivery in 16-17:

- 117 events in total
- 39 Working Together events
- 2377 participants
- 74% of participants rated their knowledge as good to excellent after attending one of the SSCB training courses and the same amount of people rated the course overall as good to excellent.
- 22 different training events
- 14 E-learning packages
- 12% courses cancelled
- New E-learning - FGM / Forced Marriage & CSE
- 5% did not attend
- Over 75% completed evaluations and these are demonstrating impact.

Outcomes as reported/evidenced by practitioners:

- The evaluations from practitioners highlight that they are more responsive to the needs of children and families in Staffordshire.
- Practitioners recognise the Safeguarding priorities and how they can respond to those needs.
- There is an increased understanding of multi-agency roles and communication between them.
- Practitioner evaluations denote a change in practise from lessons learnt within SCR's in Staffordshire.
- We have high numbers of practitioners that have completed initial (31%) and 3 month (31%) evaluations
- We have reduced numbers of 'Did Not Attends' down to 5% due to our charging policy and charging up front
- The multi-disciplinary training team remains sustained (see appendix 4)
- The new Child Protection Level 1 Core Slides have been utilised and there is a good response from a wide range of partners.

Challenges:

- The SSCB training manager post was recruited to following the retirement of the previous employee
- Training provided within the local and national priorities.
- Ensuring the quality assurance process is adhered to and robust.
- Continued confidence of practitioner's being familiar with the Learning Management System, Virtual College.

Acknowledgement of Training Team activity 2016-17

The training programme could not succeed without the positive input from those members of partner organisations who sit on the SCB Workforce Development and Training Sub-group.

The Safeguarding Children Board wishes to express its thanks and gratitude to those agencies and the individual members of staff whose commitment to SCB training has been so invaluable and we look forward to continuing our successful partnership. The successful delivery of the SCB Training Programme is highly dependent on the contributions of members of staff representing the range of SCB partner organisations. The names of the trainers to whom the SCB is most grateful are shown at Appendix 4 on page 77.

The contribution of those SCB staff who work so tirelessly behind the scenes to facilitate the staging of SCB training programmes is also recognised here and we would also wish to express our gratitude in for their excellent contributions.

Districts Sub-group

The District Safeguarding Subgroup is a formally constituted arm of Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and of Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership (SSASP). It is responsible for helping to ensure that the safeguarding children and vulnerable adults' agenda is fully embedded and driven forward in district and borough councils across Staffordshire. The subgroup is responsible for progress such as:

- Promoting effective channels of engagement and communication between the district / borough councils and the safeguarding boards; between subgroup members; and with children and their parents/ carers;
- Promoting SSCB / SSASP priorities and campaigns with district and borough councils;
- Raising awareness in partner agencies of the contribution that District Councils make to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all ages and advise Board partners on good practice and ways to improve;
- Establishing a shared understanding of safeguarding issues in district / borough councils, and develop common approaches across the eight district/borough councils towards discharging their responsibilities; and
- Promoting safeguarding workforce development and training opportunities to help to improve the recognition of and response to welfare and abuse concerns and safeguarding practice.

Progress and Achievements:

During 2016-2017 the subgroup has:

- The members of the District's Safeguarding Subgroup altered the wording / language to the Section 11 audit tool to make it more relevant for District Councils. The section 11 peer audit was completed as part of the workshop on the same date. The full section 11 audit tool is scheduled to be reviewed during next year, to make it more relevant to District Councils.
- District and Borough council policies have been updated to take account of legislative and other changes.
- Reviewed and updated District and Borough council websites to provide information on safeguarding, including promoting the work of the SSCB.
- Vulnerability hubs have been established in each district/borough to provide a local focus to safeguarding.
- Training of staff members and Councillors on safeguarding issues
- Awareness raising of key issues within organisations
- Raising awareness and commissioning services to respond to the issue of domestic abuse
- Development of a draft safeguarding policy for use by parish councils

Challenges

- Ensure that the work of the Districts is aligned to Board priorities
- Develop new, innovative ways to help keep safeguarding on local agendas
- Ensure that training for staff members is refreshed as appropriate

Review of Restraint Task Group

HMYOI Werrington falls within the SSCB locality of Staffordshire. It houses approximately one hundred and twenty children aged between fifteen and eighteen years of age. The SSCB has strong links with Werrington and robust systems and procedures. This relationship provides external partnership scrutiny and helps to ensure the effective use of Managing and Minimising Physical Restraint (MMPR) procedures, as well as to agree what action is required to remedy any identified non-compliance.

The SSCB Board Manager and other partner agency representatives are invited to quarterly Safeguarding Meetings at the establishment and an SSCB coordinated multi-agency Review of Restraint Task Group Meeting is convened on a quarterly basis.

This task group is chaired by the Local Authority's County Manager for Youth Offending Services and is attended by a range of other partners. Dip samples of restraint incidents and associated documentation which includes the views of the child / young person, are reviewed by partners to provide challenge and seek assurance that any use of force is being used appropriately in the establishment.

There are also daily checks and scrutiny feedback to the establishment's Safeguarding Team members via two local authority full time social workers who are located in HMYOI Werrington and are available for the children and young people to access; these workers help to contribute

to the establishment's welfare and safety multi-agency decision making processes. In addition there is a team of Barnardo's advocates within Werrington which see the children on request

The task group has been reviewing and monitoring the recommendations following an unannounced inspection of Werrington in February 2017 in which there were some recommendations on the use of restraint.

Key Progress on other Safeguarding Children Activity

Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS)

SCVYS was established in 1982 to meet the needs of young people by strengthening and supporting the work of local voluntary youth organisations. To the core infrastructure functions of influence, develop and connect, SCVYS adds a unique youth work specialism to providing information, advice and guidance, direct support, facilitated learning, networking, consultation and collaboration opportunities, as well as promoting Staffordshire's voluntary youth sector in various ways. SCVYS also represents the sector on a number of district, county and regional strategic partnership networks.

Current membership stands at over 150 organisations, reaching 33,000 local children and young people via programmes delivered by 8,300 volunteers and over 400 staff. SCVYS is continually working hard to interpret the high level complexities of the safeguarding arena into clear and simple key messages for the voluntary youth sector, as well as ensuring that people know where to go for help and advice as and when they need it. We do this through regular e-bulletins, newsletters, social media and direct support from development workers who have relationships with the member organisations.

SCVYS and SSCB refreshed various existing tools this year including volunteer safeguarding cards, flowchart posters and the template policy suggested for local voluntary and community groups. In addition, 672 DBS checks have been processed through SCVYS this year on behalf of the local sector.

SCVYS leads on Early Help and Children, Young People and Families Voice on behalf of local partners, and good progress has been made in both areas. Early Help, which is of particular interest to the SSCB, is taking an innovative approach locally including developing and strengthening an informal earliest help offer alongside the more formal early help approach. SCVYS has supported a Child Sexual Exploitation consultation around risky behaviour alongside the Voice Project, and continue to provide opportunities for young people to identify, debate and promote their priorities, including mental health and a curriculum for life.

The impact of all of this behind the scenes support is a safer sector where the workforce knows how to respond appropriately to concerns and disclosures, helping to keep children and young people participating in voluntary youth groups safe in Staffordshire and its surrounds.

Safeguarding in Education

The role of the Education Safeguarding Lead, Staffordshire County Council continues to develop to meet the needs of Staffordshire Education settings. The role was developed to be a

central expert and single point of contact in supporting schools and other agencies in the educational world. The role is now managed by Clive Cartman-Frost, County Manager Responsive Services, and is overseen by Vonni Gordon, Strategic Manager, Specialist Safeguarding Services. Some of the functions are:-

- Establishing direct contact and engagement routes with Heads and DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leads).
- To develop DSL termly briefings, to deliver key safeguarding messages and to foster sharing of good practice and DSL support networks in District bases
- The development of a dedicated email for communication as a vehicle to update DSL; efficiently and effectively and confidentially; this supports multi-agency information sharing partner agencies information and resources to enhance partnership working e.g. CSE, Gang Violence, Prevent.
- Central portal for Ofsted complaint with robust process of outcomes.
- Review and update Education Safeguarding website. To support and work closely with the ESAS (Education safeguarding advice support) telephone line
- Provide guidance for **all** schools on policy and process, guidance for Governors linked to their roles and responsibilities
- Support and promote campaigns e.g. CSE, prevent, gang violence.
- Audit safeguarding for individual schools and produce a working document for the schools to action.
- To be the author, on behalf of the SSCB, of the annual Sec 175/157 Safeguarding audit, and to analyse the data and produce the report for Board.
- To work alongside the SSCB to develop policies and to deliver appropriate training
- To review the SCC Education Safeguarding Policy and to disseminate it to Staffordshire schools.

During 2016/2017 all of the above functions were discharged, alongside a change in post holder in early 2017. This meant that there was a delay in producing the 2016/2017 Sec 175/157 audit report to Board but this was urgently addressed, as well as the 2017/2018 audit report being completed.

There continued to be a steady flow of Ofsted complaints, all of which were investigated and any Safeguarding concerns highlighted were addressed with the individual schools. Whether this be through identifying training needs or whistleblowing complaint procedures being implemented. Some of the complaints were identified as vexatious.

The Education Safeguarding Lead has continued to undertake audits in schools, either at the schools own request or that of Ofsted report outcomes, but the new post holder is also encouraging DSL's to support each other as a means of reflective practice. DSL's have been very vocal about the high level of support that they now feel they are receiving,

The role requires attendance and contribution at a number of strategic priority groups, eg. PREVENT, CSE outcome, SSCB, CME.

In September 2016, The Education safeguarding Lead developed the SCC Education safeguarding Policy, in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 guidance, and shared it with schools who wanted to adopt the SCC policy.

The role continues to be key to sustaining and challenging robust Education Safeguarding practices in Staffordshire education settings, and to provide the evidence to that effect.

Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

MAPPA is the mechanism whereby agencies within the 42 criminal justice areas across England and Wales work collaboratively to minimise the risks of serious harm posed to the public by sexual and violent offenders.

The Risk Management Co-ordinator, located within CSC services is the primary interface between the CSC and the MAPPA activity within Staffordshire and acts as a Single Point of Contact for all MAPPA related business. The Risk Management Coordinator also initiates any necessary referrals through to CSC services in respect of any assessment or activity required in response to information shared about a specific offender and/or as part of a multi-agency risk management plan. During 2016-2017, 224 individual discussions 42 panels were held in respect of 82 individual offenders and Staffordshire CSC services attended 100% of these panels.

Staffordshire's Families First continues to make a very significant and effective contribution to the MAPPA activities within Staffordshire. The provision of a core representative to all MAPPA panels helps to ensure that any potential risks to children can be identified and factored into offender risk assessments; and the early undertaking of appropriate social care interventions and safeguarding actions which are critical elements of individual Risk Management Plans. The function of the Risk Management Co-ordinator remains pivotal to the maintenance of effective working partnerships with those agencies whose contribution to the broader children's safeguarding agenda extends well beyond their specific MAPPA obligations. Much work also continues to be undertaken outside of the panels to understand and manage risk and this activity is an equally essential component to the protection of vulnerable children within Staffordshire.

Prevent

Staffordshire County Council, using a small grant allocated from the Home Office, has pooled funds with district and borough councils to commission the development of a curriculum resource pack for schools. The pack will include lessons plans and a DVD featuring scenarios based on issues which have been identified by young people themselves, which can be used by teachers as a stimulus for classroom discussion and other activities. The pack is intended to provide young people with a robust understanding of the risks and threats of radicalisation and extremism, equip practitioners with the confidence and skills required to address the issues in an age-appropriate way and provide an accessible way of engaging with local communities to promote resilience and cohesion. Work to develop the package commenced in the Summer Term, with the aim of launching it in the autumn of 2016.

The remaining County Council Home Office funding has been used to commission Staffordshire Observatory to undertake work in relation to enhancing our current understanding of communities in Staffordshire. This will look at the challenges and opportunities they face and the most effective ways of engaging with them. Information about risks and challenges faced by

communities will be used to enhance the Staffordshire Counter Terrorism Local Profile (which is a document produced by Staffordshire Police and which identifies the threat and vulnerability from terrorism and extremism relating to terrorism in local areas).

Prevent Referrals and Staffordshire Channel Panel

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 required local authorities to establish a multi-agency panel (known as a 'Channel Panel') to identify and support those felt to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorist activity. The Staffordshire Channel Panel has been in place since April 2015. It is made up of a small core group, which includes adult and child safeguarding, education, health (including mental health) and community safety, and a wider co-opted group of members, who can be called upon as necessary on a case-by-case basis.

In Staffordshire the approach to Prevent is being embedded as an integral part of the safeguarding agenda. Joint Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Prevent Safeguarding Guidance has been produced which is intended to provide a clear framework for all professionals working with people (or those around them) for whom there are concerns that they are at risk of becoming involved in violent extremist activity. The guidance reinforces the link between safeguarding procedures and the Channel programme and the document has been developed and endorsed by Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards.

Between 1st January 2015 and March 2016, 60 referrals were made to the Police Prevent Team. Further information about the number of referrals and the impact of local activity will be more readily available in the next SSCB Annual Report.

There has been a considerable amount of work undertaken to effectively implement and embed a robust response to tackling extremism and radicalisation in Staffordshire. The partnership approach to Prevent will continue to be developed and will build upon the strong foundations which have been established. The focus over the next 12 months will include the implementation of the training plan across the partnership workforce; the SSCB continues to support this activity by helping to coordinate free Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) training across Staffordshire. Mechanisms will be developed to ensure that the impact of training can be measured and any gaps identified and addressed. Work will also be undertaken to develop tailored and proportionate communication material for use with various audiences, including partners from the SSCB.

PARTNER AGENCIES' FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS



Partner agencies continued to make financial contributions to the work of the Board in addition to providing a variety of resources, such as staff time to help facilitate and deliver the multi-agency training and offer venues to hold both training sessions and workshops.

Income

The Board Training Team has again generated income from training that they have provided to private sector settings. This income contributes to the Board training budget. Total Income **£89,373**

Contributions

During the year the Partner Agency contributions received were £253,047.30

In addition to this £20,000 was received from the OPCC and a contribution of £9825.75 was received from Stoke-on-Trent SCB towards the CDOP Post. Total Contributions received **£283,065**.

Other Income

Included £19,540 Stoke's Contribution to IC Post, £17,860 Stokes Performance Post Contribution, £15,600 Adult Board Contribution to IC Post, £11,280 Adults Board Contribution to Performance Post. Total other Income **£64,280**.

Total Income

Total Contributions	£283,065	
Other Income	£64,280	
Training Income	£89,373	
CDOP Booklets	<u>£ 1,650</u>	
Total Income	<u>£438,368</u>	
Surplus Training Income	£ 49,152	Transferred to Reserves
<u>Total Income 16/17</u>	<u>£389,216</u>	

Expenditure

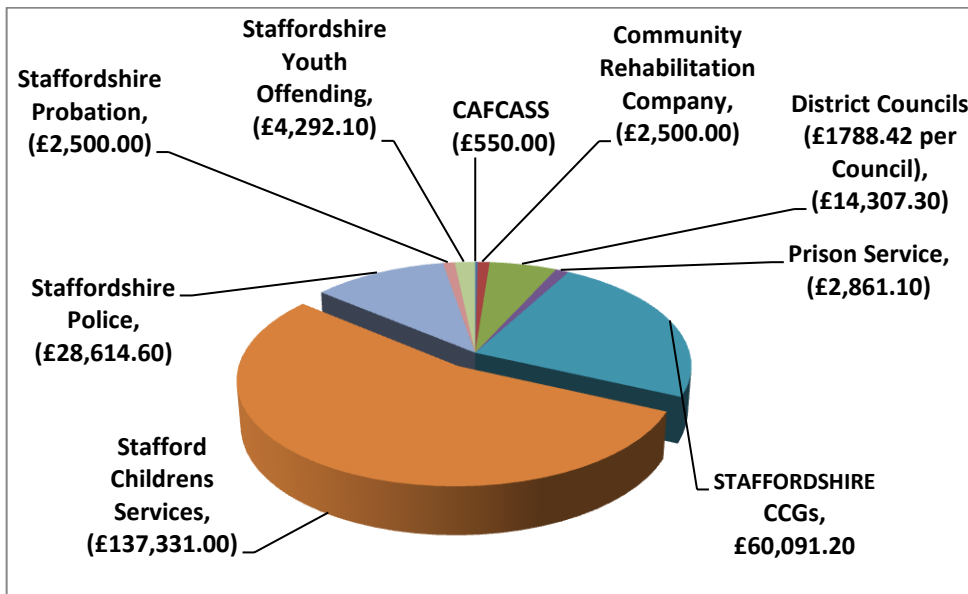
Whilst the SCB has a multi-agency training team of 47 professionals from a range of partner agencies who utilise their local knowledge and expertise, there are a small number of multi-agency training opportunities that are externally commissioned. Total Cost £18,137

Total Expenditure

Staffing costs for the SCB Core
 Team (including Training Team) £186,605
 Independent Chair £ 57,169
 SCB Trainer Costs £ 18,137
 Serious Case Reviews £ 3,479
 Contribution to the CDOP £ 29,317
 Administrator
 Supplies and Services £ 36,925
 Service development £ 57,000
 Transport £ 584
Total Expenditure for 16/17 £389,216

The contribution to reserve was £49,152, making a total surplus as at 31 March 2017 of £142,009.

The pie-chart below provides a breakdown of partner agency contribution to the SCB budget:



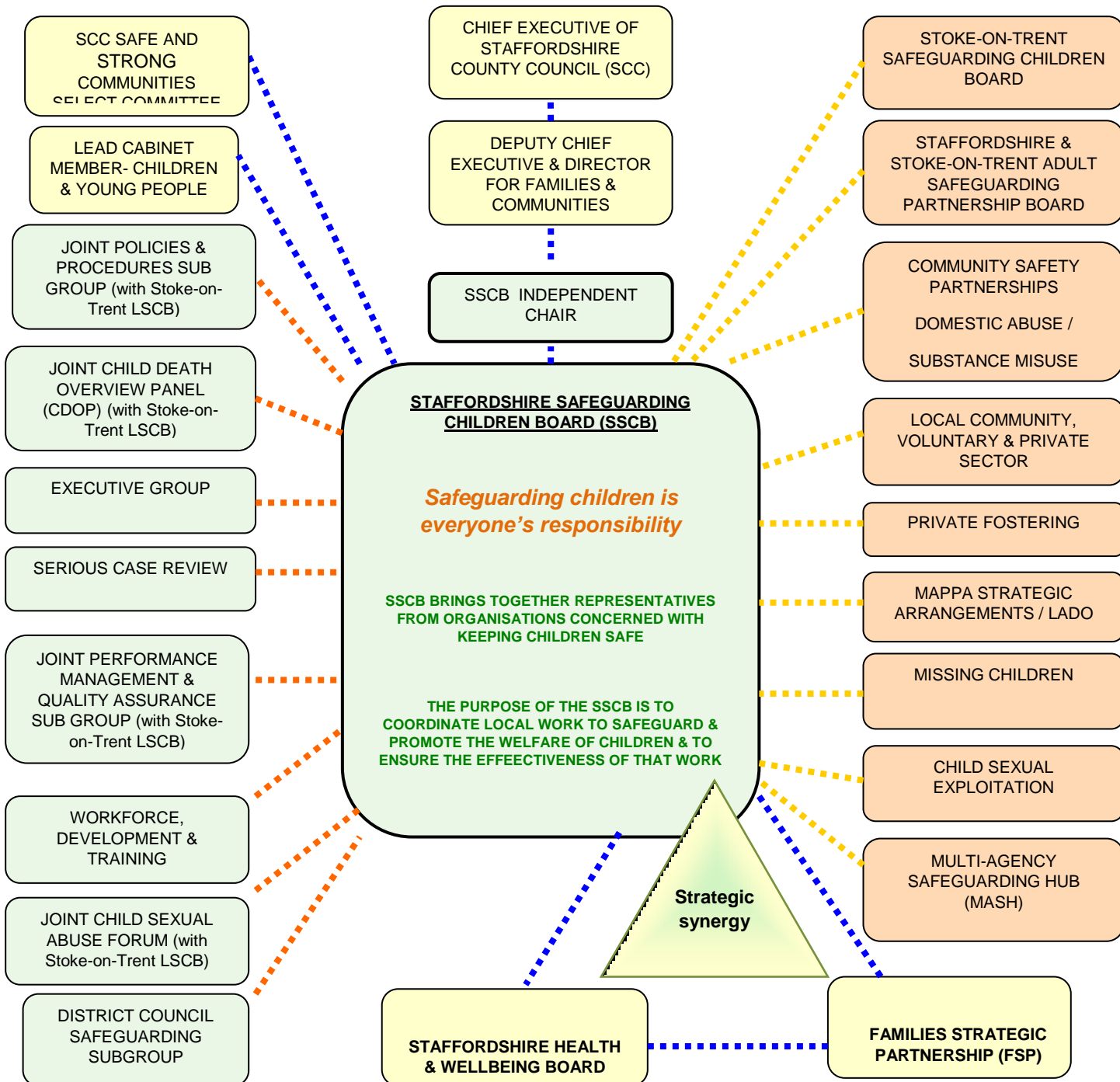
APPENDICES

Agencies of the Board

Staffordshire County Council
CAFCASS
Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)
Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS)
Burton and South Derbyshire College (<i>representing further education</i>)
Lay member
NHS England – North Midlands
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust
North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
South Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
NSPCC
Chasetown Community School (<i>representing special schools</i>)
St Dominic's Grammar School (<i>representing independent schools</i>)
Entrust
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Probation Trust
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue
Staffordshire Police
Army Welfare Service
Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
HMYOI Werrington
University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust

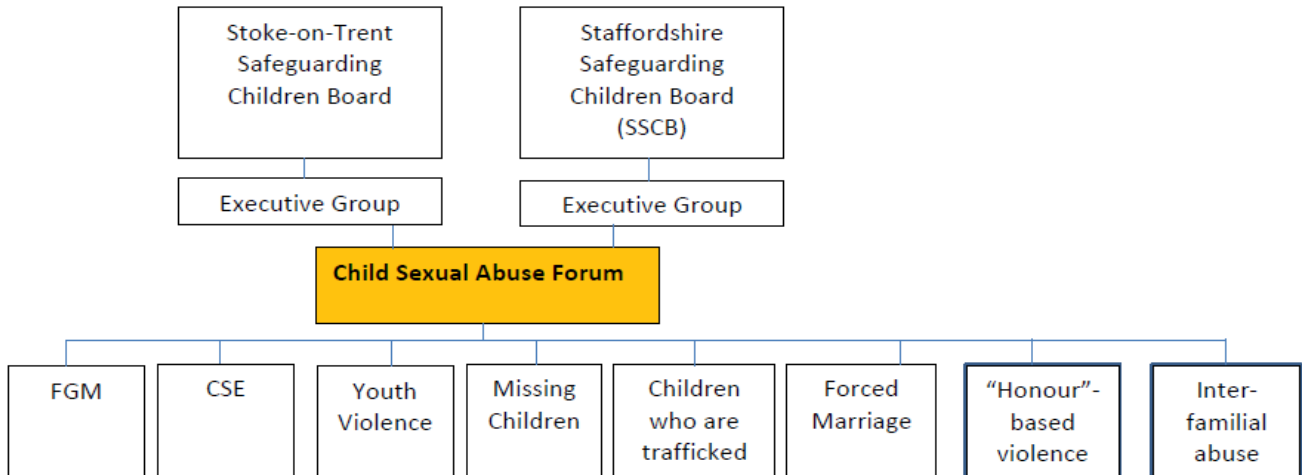
West Midlands Ambulance Service
Barnardos
District Councils

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Structure



Appendix 3

Child Sexual Abuse Forum – Structure Chart 2016



Acknowledgement of Training Team activity 2016-17
Appendix 4

Topics	Trainers	Agency
Level 2 Multi-Agency Working Together – The Staffordshire Way	Darren Maskill Dean Burrows Deb Barnes Dorothy Thomas Dr Jackie Kilding Dr Ros Negrycz Emma Blinkhorn Helen Kyle Helen Purshouse Jessica Hackett Joanna Holmes Josie Holloway Julie Burrows Lesley Frith Liz Ford Naomi Banks Narriman Crofts Penny Wilson Roz Randall Sheena Adams Shirley Archibald Simon Langford Victoria Baxendale Vikki Draper	SCC - Families First SCC - Families First SCC - Education Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust Royal Stoke University Hospital Royal Stoke University Hospital SCC - Families First Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust Staffordshire Police SCC - Families First SCC - Families First Independent Trainer Staffordshire Police SCC - Families First SCC - Families First SCC - Families First Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust SCC - Education SCC - Families First Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust South Staffordshire & Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust SCC - Families First
Level 3 Multi Agency Lessons Learnt from Serious Case Reviews	Lynne Milligan	Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board – Development Officer
Level 3 Multi Agency Children and Domestic Violence	Alison George Beverley Davis Sandy Sykes	Staffordshire Police SCC - Families First Staffordshire Women's Aid
Level 2 Multi Agency Refresher in Child Protection	Dr Jackie Kilding Hazel Shaw Josie Holloway Roz Randall Vikki Draper	Royal Stoke University Hospital SCC - Families First Independent Trainer SCC - Education SCC - Families First
Level 4 Multi Agency Designated Lead Person Training	Kim Gristy Roz Randall Stephanie Ivey	SCC - Education SCC - Education Tamworth Borough Council
Level 4 Multi Agency Safer Recruitment	Alison George Gemma Derrick Roz Randall Sharon Davies	Staffordshire Police Staffordshire Police SCC - Education Staffordshire Police
Level 4 Multi Agency Refresher in Safer	Roz Randall	SCC - Education

Recruitment and an Ongoing Culture of Vigilance		
Level 4 Multi Agency Managing Allegations of Abuse Against a Person who Works with Children – Lite Bites	Lisa Dada	SCC - First Response
Level 3 Multi Agency Female Genital Mutilation	Jenny Blewitt Roz Randall	Staffordshire Police SCC – Education
Level 3 Multi Agency Information Sharing Workshop – Lite Bites	Narriman Croft Vikki Draper	Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust SCC – Families First Trainer
Level 3 Multi Agency Recognition of Neglect and Emotional Harm	Ruth Pearson	Independent Trainer
Level 3 Multi Agency Working with Hostile and Uncooperative Families	Ruth Pearson	Independent Trainer
Level 3 Multi Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (2 Day)	Suzi Moore	Independent Trainer
Level 3 Multi Agency Intra-familial Sexual Abuse	Suzi Moore	Independent Trainer
Level 3 Multi Agency Substance Misuse and Parenting Capacity	Danielle Ferrari David Sheffield	T3 Young Person's Substance Misuse Service
Level 3 Multi Agency Safeguarding Children with a Disability	Sarah Goff	Ann Craft Trust
Level 3 Multi Agency Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence	Savana Trainer	Savana
Level 3 Multi Agency Getting to know the Child Sexual Exploitation unit and your role – incorporating missing children	Julie Burrows	Staffordshire Police
Level 3 Multi Agency Mental Health and Child Protection	Claire Hinstead Simon Langford Victoria Baxendale	South Staffordshire & Shropshire Foundation Trust South Staffordshire & Shropshire Foundation Trust North Staffs Combined Healthcare Trust
Level 3 Multi Agency Understanding Suicide and Self Harm	Beverley Roberts Narriman Croft	Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust
Level 3 Multi Agency Safeguarding Children & E Safety	Simon Street	Staffordshire Police