

Report of the Independent Chair of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board

2013/14 Multi Agency Audit - Monitoring the Effectiveness of Arrangements for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

Summary

1. Members will receive the report of the Independent Chair of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board and an update on the outcome of the Section 11 Audit Regional Challenge Event.

Background

2. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 states that in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare, the agencies covered by s11 should make arrangements to ensure that:
 - Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
 - A clear line of accountability exists within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children is available for all staff
 - Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
 - Staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or depending on the agency's primary functions are in contact with children and families
 - Service development takes account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is informed where appropriate by the views of children and families
 - Effective information sharing
 - Work with individual children and their families
 - Safer recruitment

- Monitoring and inspection of arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
3. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2013) requires Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of organisations' implementation of their duties under s11 of the Children Act 2004.
 4. The City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) has a key role in ensuring high standards in safeguarding and promoting welfare, not just through co-ordinating services but also through evaluation and continuous improvement.
 5. The CYSCB's self assessment audit sets a minimum level of safeguarding standards an organisation needs to have in place to work safely, and should complement and underpin, rather than replace, other standards or procedures.
 6. The s11 audit takes place annually and in January 2014 the CYSCB took part in a joint challenge / learning event' with colleagues from the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board.

Key s11 findings 2013/14

7. A brief examination of the returns highlights positive messages in relation to scores exceeding 70% compliance across the agencies the full detail is set out in annex 1:
 - Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare (Overall 81%; Range 76% to 85%)
 - A named person with sufficient seniority has been identified by the agency to champion safeguarding within the organisation (85%)
 - A process has been established that enables the organisation to take forward safeguarding initiatives and deal with findings from serious case reviews e.g. the establishment of a safeguarding forum and a strategic plan for safeguarding children (76%)
 - A clear line of accountability exists within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (Overall 77%; 59% to 85%)
 - Safeguarding priorities are reflected in the agency's strategic plan (81%)

- Policies and procedures are in place that identify clear reporting structures for concerns about children (85%)
- Safeguarding responsibilities are identified in each individual job description (81%)
- Each agency has policies and procedures in place that clearly identify staff roles regarding safeguarding children and young people. They provide a policy or web address where they can be found. These policies include information on safeguarding procedures and information sharing (81%)
- Effective complaints procedures are in place for children, staff and other people where there are concerns that safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare has not been taken in accordance with the agencies procedures (80%)

The self audit overall outcomes against the standards are shown in the table below:

Agency	%
Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust	92%
NSPCC	92%
Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	90%
Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group	87%
York CVS	82%
York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	81%
Lifeline	78%
Askham Grange	72%
Children's Social Care	72%
York & North Yorkshire Probation Trust	72%
Youth Offending Team	72%
School Improvement Service	62%
Housing	61%
CAFCASS	0%*
North Yorkshire Police	0%*

* Denotes that the agency did not score their performance

8. Some specific standards scored between 40% and 60% indicating that although there are no safeguarding concerns and there is an action plan signed off with time scales for completion, there are identified areas requiring improvement.
9. Specific standards where there are action plans in place for improvement are:
 - Staff are undertaking a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when the need is identified (58%)
 - Consultation with children and families is an agreed process for the development of any service provided (51%)
 - The principles of good practice identified above are included in induction programmes where appropriate (57%)
 - The principles of good practice outlined above are reinforced in supervision and the supervisor regularly reads and signs off case records and plans (58%)
 - Safeguarding is routinely discussed and is a standing item in supervision and appraisal (59%)
 - Safer recruitment training has been provided to all staff involved with recruitment in line with NCSL/CWDC training (53%)
 - There must be named senior officers within the organisation who ensure allegations are passed to the LADO. Evidence will include the numbers passed to the LADO and whether they are taken forward within the timescales (59%)
10. Overall, CYSCB member agencies are broadly compliant with statutory and Board requirements in respect of their commitment and practice in relation to safeguarding children. However there are some key areas where agencies did not self report as performing so well.

Supervision

11. This is a key mechanism within safeguarding for monitoring progress, holding staff to account along with guiding staff in their professional development. As such it is essential that all agencies who work with children have in place regular reflective supervision. The CYSCB has taken a lead in this area with training provided for schools and other agencies for peer supervision.

Safer recruitment and having in place robust processes for dealing with allegations against childcare professionals

12. These are cornerstones in ensuring safe environments for children. It is evident from the audit that there are inconsistencies across agencies which need addressing. Arising from the audit, the CYSCB will require all agencies to be fully compliant with this area by July 2014.

Involving children and families in feedback and service planning

13. It is essential to be able to demonstrate the difference this has made. It is disappointing that this area scored the lowest. Therefore the CYSCB is providing leadership with innovative work being undertaken on its behalf to identify mechanisms where children and families can share their perceptions on the quality and effectiveness of services and ideas of how we can improve.

14. Summary of Recommendations

- i. The CYSCB will receive assurance reports at each meeting from the statutory agencies to monitor the agency improvement plans already in place.
- ii. The CYSCB will require each agency to prioritise improvements in supervision, engage with children and these will be priorities for the business plan for 2014/15 those areas
- iii. At the July meeting The CYSCB will require assurances from its members that safer recruitment and robust processes for dealing with allegations against childcare professionals are in place
- iv. An audit challenge event, jointly with North Yorkshire, will be held in York in January 2015 as part of a continuous improvement cycle

Reason: To ensure that statutory requirement set out in "Working Together 2013" are met.

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Annexes:

Annex 1 - s11 summary report

Background Paper: Working Together 2013

Abbreviations

s11 – Section 11

LSCBs - Local Safeguarding Children Boards

CYSCB -The City of York Safeguarding Children Board

CAF - Common Assessment Framework

NHS – National Health Service

NCSL - National College for School Leadership

CWDC - Children’s Workforce Development Council

LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer

Title: s11 summary report

Author: Joe Cocker

Date: 29/01/2014

Status: Information

Confidential: No

Item: 10

Related items:

S11 brief summary

The audit was undertaken in autumn 2014 across the key CYSCB agencies.

The key (relevant) organisations and bodies that are covered by the duty under the Children Act 2004 (s11) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people are:

- Local Authorities.
- The Police.
- The Probation Service.
- NHS Bodies.
- Organisations providing services under s.114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.
- Youth Offending Teams.
- Governors and Directors of Prisons.
- Private and Voluntary organisations who are commissioned to provide services on behalf of the above bodies.

The following partners completed and submitted a Section 11 Audit return:

- Askham Grange
- CAFCASS
- Children's Social Care

- Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust
- Housing
- Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Lifeline
- NSPCC
- North Yorkshire Police
- School Improvement Service
- Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group
- York CVS
- York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- York & North Yorkshire Probation Trust
- Youth Offending Team

Agencies were required to score themselves against each area covered by the s11 guidance as follows:

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Applicable Not in operation No action plan to address this at present Potential safeguarding concerns. (if not please provide evidence of this)	Identified Weakness. Aim to develop an action plan at senior level to address this. Potential safeguarding concerns. (if not please provide evidence of this)	Identified Weakness but have action plan signed off with time scales for completion No safeguarding concerns (Please provide evidence of this)	Currently in the process of implementing action plan. Will be fully compliant by next audit. No safeguarding concerns (Please provide evidence of this)	Compliant in relation to the service our organisation offers No safeguarding concerns	Fully compliant

Brief summary

The scoring for each of the areas in the audit is as follows.

It should be noted that two agencies either did not provide a score (NY Police) or submitted a return developed by their national organisation (CASFCASS).

% Score	Definition
20%	Identified weakness. Aim to develop an action plan at senior level to address this. Potential safeguarding concerns
40%	Identified weakness but have action plan signed off with time scales for completion. No safeguarding concerns
60%	Currently in the process of implementing action plan. Will be fully compliant by next audit. No safeguarding concerns
80%	Compliant in relation to the service the organisation offers. No safeguarding concerns
100%	Fully compliant

A brief examination of the returns highlights positive messages in relation to scores exceeding 70% compliance across the agencies (in order – scores below 60% in bold):

- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare (Overall 81%; Range 76% to 85%)
 - A named person with sufficient seniority has been identified by the agency to champion safeguarding within the organisation (85%)
 - A process has been established that enables the organisation to take forward safeguarding initiatives and deal with findings from serious case reviews e.g. the establishment of a safeguarding forum and a strategic plan for safeguarding children (76%)
- A clear line of accountability exists within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (Overall 77%; 59% to 85%)
 - Safeguarding priorities are reflected in the agency's strategic plan (81%)
 - Policies and procedures are in place that identify clear reporting structures for concerns about children (85%)
 - Safeguarding responsibilities are identified in each individual job description (81%)
 - Safeguarding is routinely discussed and is a standing item in supervision and appraisal (59%)

- A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children is available for all staff (Overall 745%; Range 64% to 81%)
 - Each agency has policies and procedures in place that clearly identify staff roles regarding safeguarding children and young people. They provide a policy or web address where they can be found. These policies include information on safeguarding procedures and information sharing (81%)
 - Effective complaints procedures are in place for children, staff and other people where there are concerns that safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare has not been taken in accordance with the agencies procedures (80%)
 - Policies exist that include reference to the importance of listening to children and responding appropriately (64%)
- Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Overall 74%; Range 58% to 80%)
 - Inter-agency working should exist at a strategic level. Evidence would include regular attendance at the LSCB and its work streams and sub groups (80%)
 - Staff comply with safeguarding procedures regarding attendance at Child Protection Conferences and other multi-agency meetings (77%)
 - Staff are aware of the thresholds for making a referral to Children & Young People's Social Care (78%)
 - Staff are undertaking a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when the need is identified (58%)
- Staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or depending on the agency's primary functions are in contact with children and families (Overall 71%; Range 60% to 80%)
 - Agency has an identified strategy for providing training at all tiers identified in Working Together (60%)
 - Agency has evidenced the safeguarding training it has provided including the numbers trained and the type and level of training (69%)
 - All safeguarding training meets the requirements of the LSCB (71%)

- What action does your agency take to ensure that staff are encouraged and enabled to access child protection and safeguarding training? (80%)

There are areas where performance is not so good (between 60% and 70%) which was the focus of attention at the joint learning event:

- Service development takes account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is informed where appropriate by the views of children and families (Overall 67%; Range 51% to 79%)
 - Development of new services considers how safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will be taken into account (74%)
 - The views of children and families have been sought regarding the development of services (62%)
 - Consultation with children and families is an agreed process for the development of any service provided (51%)
 - Services are developed which ensure equality of access for all sectors of the community (79%)
- Information sharing (Overall 67%; Range 51% to 80%)
 - Organisation is signed up to the CYSCB information sharing agreement (51%)
 - All staff in the organisation are made aware of what to do if they believe a child is in need of services (80%)
 - Staff understand when to share information that is legal and ethical if they have concerns that a child is potentially being abused (71%)
 - Staff in specific settings are aware of when information should be shared e.g. Knowledge of substance misuse, sexual exploitation, children who go missing procedures (66%)
- Work with individual children and their families (Overall 66%; Range 58% to 70%)
 - Staff are aware of the roles of other professionals and agencies and understand the principles of Working Together with children, young people and their families within a multi-agency approach as defined in the CYSCB procedures (69%)

- Assessments carried out with children and their families adhere to the principles underpinning all work to safeguarding children as defined in the CYSCB Safeguarding procedures (70%)
- The principles of good practice identified above are included in induction programmes where appropriate (57%)
- Work with individual children and families adheres to principles of anti-discriminatory practice and equality of opportunity and they are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse (78%)
- The principles of good practice outlined above are reinforced in supervision and the supervisor regularly reads and signs off case records and plans (58%)
- Safer recruitment (Overall 60%; Range 53% to 69%)
 - Agency has a safer recruitment policy in line with the CYSCB procedures (69%)
 - All staff working with vulnerable people have CRB checks that have been updated within the last three years (60%)
 - Safer recruitment training has been provided to all staff involved with recruitment in line with NCSL/CWDC training (53%)
 - All staff where appropriate are aware of the procedures for allegations against staff and have received relevant training (60%)
 - There must be named senior officers within the organisation who ensure allegations are passed to the LADO. Evidence will include the numbers passed to the LADO and whether they are taken forward within the timescales (59%)

One area scored less than 40% although it is noted that this area is reliant on previous s11 audits which was in a different format:

- Monitoring and inspection of arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Overall 34%; Range 25% to 39%)
 - Agency has agreed target score for this audit to be achieved in the next year (39%)
 - Performance data is shared with the board. Data to be included in the LSCB performance report, annual report and business plan (35%)
 - The organisation has met its target from the previous year (25%)

The returns show variation across agencies with the highest two scoring 92% and the lowest 62%:

Agency	%	Rank
Askham Grange	72%	8 th
CAFCASS	0%	14 th
Children's Social Care	72%	8 th
Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust	92%	1 st
Housing	61%	13 th
Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	90%	3 rd
Lifeline	78%	7 th
NSPCC	92%	1 st
North Yorkshire Police	0%	14 th
School Improvement Service	62%	12 th
Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group	87%	4 th
York CVS	82%	5 th
York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	81%	6 th
York & North Yorkshire Probation Trust	72%	8 th
Youth Offending Team	72%	8 th

The areas scoring between 40% and 60% indicates that although there are no safeguarding concerns and there is an *action plan signed off with time scales for completion*, there are *identified weaknesses*. These can be broadly grouped into three areas 1) accountability when working with children and families 2) safer working practices *and* 3) involving children and families in service planning.

Accountability when working with children and families

- Safeguarding is routinely discussed and is a standing item in supervision and appraisal (Overall 59%; Range 40% - 100%)
- The principles of good practice... are reinforced in supervision and the supervisor regularly reads and signs off case records and plans (Overall 58%; Range 20% to 100%)

- The principles of good practice.... are included in induction programmes where appropriate (Overall 57%; Range 20% to 100%)

Supervision is a key activity in safeguarding with the Skills for Care stating that *'Supervision must enable and support workers to build effective professional relationships, develop good practice, and exercise both professional judgement and discretion in decision-making..... Supervision should improve the quality of practice, support the development of integrated working and ensure continuing professional development. Supervision should contribute to the development of a learning culture by promoting an approach that develops the confidence and competence of managers in their supervision skills. It is therefore at the core of individual and group continuing professional development'* (Skills for Care 2007).

Whilst the nature and format of supervision will differ across disciplines it is essential that all agencies working directly with children and families have in place good quality, reflective supervision. In view of the range in the responses, this is an area where good and innovative practice should be shared between agencies.

Involving children and families in service planning

- Consultation with children and families is an agreed process for the development of any service provided (Overall 51%; Range 20% to 100%)
- The views of children and families have been sought regarding the development of services (Overall 62%; Range 20% to 100%) [Note: although the overall score exceeds 60% it has been included due to it describing a similar picture to the previous question in terms of range]

To be truly effective, services for children and families should be informed by the views and experiences of service users. There was wide variation in responses to this with one key agency scoring 20% (Identified weakness. Aim to develop an action plan at senior level to address this; potential safeguarding concerns).

This is a complex area where good and innovative practice should be shared between agencies.

Safer working practices

- Safer recruitment training has been provided to all staff involved with recruitment in line with NCSL/CWDC training (Overall 53%; Range 40% to 80%)
- There must be named senior officers within the organisation who ensure allegations are passed to the LADO. Evidence will include the numbers passed to the LADO and whether they are taken forward within the timescales (Overall 59%; Range 20% to 100%)

Whilst it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable people will not practice within the wider children's workforce, adopting safer working practice acts to deter, prevent and identify those with malign intentions or who may not be suitable to work with children. It is therefore essential to achieve 100% compliance in this area.

Next steps

A few of the CYSCB agencies attended a learning / challenge event held jointly with the North Yorkshire LSCB (NYSCB) on the 14th January 2014. The event focussed on the three areas highlighted above with agency participants being able to readjust their scores along with sharing areas of good practice and / or challenges in meeting the s11 requirements.

The intention following the event is provide a more comprehensive analysis of the returns along with the actions agreed by the agencies who attended.

In view of the value of working alongside the NYSCB the aim is to repeat the event, hosted by the CYSCB, next year.