



## Bracknell Forest LSCB Annual Report 2010/11

### Summary

#### Introduction

Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) was established in April 2006 and is chaired by an Independent Chair, who is not an employee of any of the organisations working with children or families in Bracknell Forest.

The LSCB brings together senior managers who represent a broad range of organisations that work together to promote the welfare of, or protect, children and young people. These organisations include: Thames Valley Police, Children's Social Care, Schools, Health services, Probation, Early Years and the Voluntary sector, to name a few.

The LSCB strives to 'ensure the effectiveness' of local services safeguarding and child protection practice and 'co-ordinate services' to promote the welfare of children and families. The LSCB has a broad range of responsibilities, from raising awareness of child safeguarding and protection with professionals, volunteers, children, young people and the communities they live in; through to reviewing child deaths and conducting Serious Case Reviews.

#### About this document

The LSCB is required<sup>1</sup> to produce and publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The 2010/11 report covers LSCB activities from April 2010 to March 2011 and is the fifth Annual Report the LSCB has produced. Due to the sensitive nature of some of the contents, the full Annual Report is confidential. Any requests for the full report should be submitted to the LSCB Independent Chair via the following weblink [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren)

This document summarises the main areas from the full Annual Report which are as follows:

- The assessment of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements and response to case reviews
- Overview & Scrutiny Report on local safeguarding arrangements
- Performance Management
- Achievements and Challenges
- Assessment of Policies and Procedures
- Feedback to, and challenge of, the Children and Young People's (CYP) Partnership

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<sup>1</sup> Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

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## The assessment of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements and response to case reviews

This section looks at how well organisations keep children and young children safe in Bracknell Forest and also what lessons have been learnt, what has worked well and what might need to change.

The LSCB assesses the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements in various ways, including:

- Section 11 safeguarding self-assessments
- Ensuring Effectiveness self-assessments and other reports by Partner Agencies
- Individual case analysis (including child deaths, Serious Case Reviews and Multi-Agency Reviews)
- Review of safeguarding incidents
- Review of performance management information.

An Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment arrangements within Bracknell Forest Council Children's Services was conducted in August 2010; it identified:

- a number of areas of strength including well managed contact referral and assessment services, thorough and detailed assessments informed by a good use of research, high staff morale and good quality appraisals were also highlighted
- areas for development included being clear if children are seen alone in assessments, differentiating contacts and referrals, reviewing Assistant Team Manager's holding of cases and Family Support workers conducting initial assessments.

### Section 11 Self Assessments:

All local Agencies providing services to children and young people were asked to self-assess the extent to which they met the safeguarding requirements set out in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (i.e. information sharing; clear statement of Agency's responsibilities; senior management commitment to safeguarding; safer workforce practice; training; clear line of accountability for child protection; effective inter-agency working and that service development takes account of safeguarding).

<b>Recommendation to CYP Partnership:</b>
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To ensure that organisations that are commissioned to provide services to children and young people or families in the borough, have completed a satisfactory Section 11 self-assessment.
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Most organisations that completed Section 11 assessments put robust action plans in place to ensure that actions were addressed in a timely fashion. The LSCB seeks progress reports on achievements against these action areas approximately a year after review of the sector's self-assessments are completed by the LSCB.

However, the LSCB has expressed specific concerns to the CYP Partnership about the following areas:

- ❖ A few voluntary, community and faith sector providers have no child protection policies or procedures in place. These providers have been given immediate support to implement changes to their internal systems and processes promptly
- ❖ Some providers did not respond to repeated requests to conduct safeguarding self-assessments

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- ❖ Some providers were non-compliant with local minimum standards for organisations providing services to children or young people i.e. :
  - safer workforce checks
  - safeguarding training
  - a safeguarding/child protection policy, which includes information on how to manage child protection concerns, contact details for Children’s Social Care and EDT
  - a nominated lead for child protection.

Each of the non-compliant organisations received correspondence, phone calls or visits from representatives of the LSCB or safeguarding representatives in the sector. In total approximately 200 organisations/providers received individual follow-up in 2010/11.

The LSCB used its Autumn 2010 Stakeholder event to focus specifically on information sharing, the use of CAF and Integrated Care Pathways in response to Section 11 development needs identified in 2009/10. Approximately 180 attendees came to the event from a wide range of partner organisations. Evaluations from the event demonstrated that a number of attendees reported that their assumptions about information sharing and the use of the CAF were challenged.

<b>Recommendation to CYP Partnership:</b>
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The Shared Processes and Children’s Workforce Strategy sub-groups are asked to note the development areas relating to Information Sharing and Safer Workforce practice and ensure that appropriate support/resources are made available locally to the children’s workforce.
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### Ensuring Effectiveness

In addition to Section 11 self-assessments, the LSCB requires a variety of annual reports on targeted groups or particular processes which are scrutinised by LSCB Partners.

The LSCB also conducts additional analysis following strategic needs. An example of more detailed investigation by the LSCB during 2010/11 was ‘A systematic analysis of reported sexual offences against children and young people, which occurred in Bracknell Forest, between 01 April 2009 and 31 March 2010’. The review included a qualitative analysis of the reported sexual offences against children and young people in 2009/10 and brought together information from Thames Valley Police, Children’s Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Youth Offending Service, Connexions Berkshire and School nursing.

The LSCB will be monitoring progress with the actions resulting from this report in Autumn 2011, however at the end of 2010/11 the following progress had been made with these actions:

- ❖ Bracknell Forest LSCB commissioned Sexual Exploitation training
- ❖ Children’s Social Care and Thames Valley Police have reviewed their processes for referral and information exchange about sexual offences against young people.
- ❖ The e-safety Sub-Group has reinforced the following messages to children and young people, parents and carers; and members of the workforce:
  - Positive messages about relationships
  - Highlighting the importance of not giving out personal information online

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- Encouraging extreme care when sending images by mobile phone or posting them online
  - Reminding young people about the importance of privacy settings
  - Reminding young people not to meet up with anyone who they have only met online
  - Encouraging them to only be in contact with people that they know online
  - Encouraging parents and carers to be aware of what their children and young people are doing online and to discuss it with them.
- ❖ CAF training and guidance materials have been extended to provide more information on writing action plans and conducting reviews.

## Child Death & Serious Case Reviews

In addition to reviewing child deaths that occurred in 2010-11; the LSCB commissioned four Internal Management Reviews (IMRs) and initiated one Serious Case Review relating to children who had been seriously harmed following abuse or neglect.

The IMRs made a range of recommendations for agencies. In summary the learning from the IMRs included:

That the quality of assessments transferred in from other Local Authority areas needs to be reviewed i.e. assessments should not automatically be accepted as complete or accurate
If a parent is accessing CMHT services, CMHT's risk assessment should automatically be shared with Children's Social Care and any other relevant professionals (as appropriate)
That brief parenting assessments should be reinstated, to be used as appropriate
That Health Visitors share child protection concerns about vulnerable families within 24 hours
That supervision for health visitors and nursery nurses is reviewed and provided more frequently
That assessments should include information relating to all members of the household and carers, and specific attention should be given to parenting capacity in assessments
That paediatric radiologists strictly adhere to protocol when conducting paediatric skeletal surveys

### **Recommendations to CYP Partnership:**

Following the findings of the review and discussions about the appropriateness of local provision, the LSCB makes the following recommendations to the Children Young People's (CYP) Partnership:

- ❖ That the learning from the Child Death Overview Panel's analysis is noted and is used to specifically inform Public Health priorities.
- ❖ That the learning from the IMRs is noted by the partnership and informs the CYP Partnership's strategic priorities.

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## Quality Standards and Case Review

Each LSCB partner agency was asked to complete an 'ensuring effectiveness' update in July 2010, which summarised the agency's progress with their Section 11 and Safer Workforce self-assessment actions. It was also an opportunity to identify safeguarding areas of strategic priority for 2010/11 and safeguarding risks. The QSCR sub-group analysed the returns and reported back to LSCB partners, in summary the findings were:

Common Safeguarding/Child Protection Priorities for 2010 onwards.

Applicable to three or more organisations, were the following:

- Ensure staff/volunteers attend appropriate safeguarding training
- Update, or introduce new, policies/procedures or guidance
- Establish or enhance internal audit systems
- Increase the participation of children and young people in service design or evaluation
- Raise awareness or understanding of safeguarding in organisation or sector.

Common risks in 2010

Common risks to three or more organisations were:

- Impact of cuts to/ reductions in frontline capacity on the protection of children
- Reduced capacity of services and the impact on the protection of children
- Difficulties accessing CP training or significant numbers of staff requiring CP training
- Concerns about whether or not organisations would meet the minimum requirements for safeguarding in inspections.

**Recommendations to CYP Partnership:** Following the learning from the QSCR sub-group, the LSCB makes the following recommendations to the Children Young People's (CYP) Partnership:

That the CYP Partnership notes the common safeguarding priorities and specifically ensures that:

- Sufficient child protection training is available to the workforce
- The involvement of children, young people, parents and carers in service design and delivery is promoted
- Quality assurance in the partnership prioritise safeguarding.

That the CYP Partnership notes the risks associated with the impact of reductions in service on the capacity of staff and volunteers to identify child protection concerns early and intervene to protect/safeguard children.

That the CYP Partnership's preparation for inspection gives specific attention to the review of partnership safeguarding responsibilities

## Overview & Scrutiny Report on local safeguarding arrangements

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In January 2011 Bracknell Forest Council's Children, Young People & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel conducted a Review of Safeguarding Children and Young People. The review concluded that:

*'In overall terms, in all major respects we are very satisfied that the Council and its partners have done all they reasonably can to safeguard children and young people. This is notwithstanding the observations and recommendations made elsewhere in this report, which point out the need for constant improvement. It behoves everyone not to be complacent or relax their efforts for one moment.'*<sup>2</sup>

The report noted the strength of partnership working in Bracknell to safeguard children and also the success of the LSCB's Safeguarding Toolkit and the safeguarding cuecards.

The following recommendations from the report relate to the activity of the LSCB specifically and progress towards implementing them is already underway:

- 'The Council's website should give clearer links to the role and activities of the LSCB and Children's Trust.'
- 'The LSCB should be asked to include 'real life' examples of good practice in their Safeguarding Toolkit.' 'The Council should continue to actively promote the Toolkit and support the voluntary sector in their take-up of it.'
- 'We support the view of the Executive members for Children and Young People that there is scope to further improve engagement with young people, for example, in terms of a shadow Children's Trust, led by children and young people.'
- 'The LSCB Safeguarding Cue Cards are an excellent idea and should remain freely available to all, and promoted at every opportunity.'
- 'The structure of the Children's Trust also the LSCB should be reviewed, in particular to determine whether it might be better to have the wider groups meeting less frequently with a smaller subset of each group operating in an executive capacity and meeting more frequently, with full accountability to the wider group.'
- 'The Panel should continue to receive and review the annual report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and in future this should include a discussion on the report with the Chair of the LSCB, in the Panel's public meeting.'

## **Performance Management**

In 2010/11 Bracknell Forest LSCB led the initiative to reduce the Berkshire LSCB Comprehensive Dataset in order to focus on indicators of particular relevance for the Berkshire LSCBs.

Over the course of 2010/11 the LSCB noted these successes:

- ✓ Number of children on the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) waiting list reduced from 448 in March 2010 to 372 in March 2011 (across Berkshire).
- ✓ 100% of Looked After Children reviews were completed on time and 97.1% of the children eligible to participate in the reviews were active participants in the process.

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<sup>2</sup> Children, Young People & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel conducted a Review of Safeguarding Children and Young People (January 2011), p.65, para 4.33

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- ✓ Reduction in percentage of Looked After Children with three or more placement moves in a year from 19.3% in 2009/10 to 8% in 2010/11.
- ✓ Rate of permanent exclusions fell from 0.18% in 2008/09 to 0.10% in 2009/10 Academic Year.
- ✓ Teenage pregnancy reduced by 28.7% from 2008 to 2009.
- ✓ No children subject to a Child Protection Plan for 2 years or more in March 2011.
- ✓ Number of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time reduced from 14.4% in 2009/10 to 9.2% in 2010/11.
- ✓ Number of Looked After Children in 2010/11 is almost identical to the number in 2009/10 (87 children on 31.3.11 and 88 at 31.3.10), the rate is still lower than South East and England.
- ✓ First time entrants to the Youth Justice system reduced from 55 to 40.

The LSCB also noted the following areas that require local monitoring:

- Number of referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) has increased by 20% across Berkshire and 13% in Bracknell Forest in 2010/11 compared with 2009/10.
- 4% increase in enquiries to Children's Social Care (i.e. 2168.4 by 31.3.11, compared to 2081 by 31.03.10).
- Slight (8.6%) increase in Sexual Offences against under 18s. In 2009/10 there were 81 and 2010/11 there were 88.
- A rise in deaths of under-18s during 2010/11; in comparison 2009/10 and 2008/09.
- Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan is showing a year-on-year increase (snapshot figures show there were 70 at 31.3.10 and 79 on 31.3.11) but still below national average.
- Almost a quarter (24%) of Children's Social Care referrals are re-referred within a year. This is almost identical to last year. The Quality Standards and Case Review sub-group are currently analysing re-referrals across the partnership and expect to report their findings in Autumn 2011.

In addition, the LSCB is asked to note that some allegations against members of the children's workforce have led to disciplinary action and criminal convictions; due to potentially identifiable information these figures are not made available in the annual report.

### **Assessment of Policies and Procedures**

During 2010/11 Bracknell Forest LSCB completed a review of referral and assessment processes and introduced new guidance on whistle-blowing.

The LSCB is specifically required to comment in the Annual Report on the effectiveness of the following policies and procedures:

#### Safe Recruitment

Each LSCB Partner was required to undertake a safer workforce self-assessment in 2007-08. Progress in implementing action plans from the assessment was monitored through the LSCBs ensuring effectiveness

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annual return. Following analysis of the safer workforce assessments Bracknell Forest LSCB issued a safer workforce checklist to all organisations in Bracknell (as part of the Safeguarding Toolkit) in February 2009 and by the end of March 2010 safer workforce training has been delivered to over 300 managers across the partnership. Other Berkshire East and latterly, Berkshire West LSCBs have started purchasing places on the Safer Workforce training programme. Measuring the impact of this provision remains challenging, but there were 31 referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in 10/11 in line with neighbouring authorities. These referrals came from a range of sectors.

### Single and Inter-Agency Training

Following concerns about feedback from the targeted, level two child protection training programme the programme has been redesigned in Berkshire East and will be launched in September 2011. Sexual exploitation training and e-safety training have been incorporated into the LSCB training programme.

LSCB discussions identified that children experiencing chronic neglect is a particular local issue. Subsequently, chronic neglect training courses are being explored and a training workshop has been designed for the June 2011 Annual Conference, to respond to local training needs.

In addition, following local learning the operational training group have been asked by Bracknell Forest LSCB to incorporate several of learning points into the redesign of the group 1 to 3 programme, including:

- Reminding staff and volunteers when to refer to Children's Social Care with and without consent;
- Reminding staff and volunteers of the need to consider domestic abuse, substance misuse and emotional health needs during assessment of parenting capacity;
- Considering a parent/carer's childhood experience of being parented in assessments;

New training needs identified by the LSCB include:

- Training on chronic neglect, with specific reference to evidence-based interventions/support of families. A specific workshop will be offered on this theme at the LSCB's 2011 Annual Conference.

### **Achievements and Challenges**

2010/11 has been a successful year for Bracknell Forest LSCB and there is much to celebrate, for example:

- The Safeguarding Toolkit continues to be adopted by other LSCBs nationally.
- Children and young people's participation in LSCB activity - Bracknell Forest was noted as one of three areas of best practice nationally. At the LSCB 2010 Annual Conference, young people wrote and performed a series of monologues on 'risky behaviour'. Younger children were involved in designing a safeguarding resource, with interactive games and puzzles, to promote safeguarding in the borough.
- Conference - the LSCB's 2010 Annual Conference on the theme of 'risky behaviours' was a great success and was heavily over-subscribed. Speakers from the National Centre for Social Research, Barnardo's and a Children's Author brought a range of perspectives to the day. Workshops were held on subjects including E-safety, sexual exploitation, understanding offenders, emotional health needs, behaviour support and working with perpetrators in the community.



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- Training - a complete review and redesign of targeted safeguarding training was completed in 2010/11 across Berkshire East. A new Group 1 to 3 training programme will be launched in September 2011.

However some of the challenges the LSCB faced during 2010/11 were:

- Resource - reductions in resource due to public service budgetary pressures has had a tangible impact on the number of staff and volunteers attending child protection training. Of more concern is the potential impact of these reductions on the ability of the workforce to identify safeguarding concerns early and their opportunity to intervene effectively.
- Training - uncertainty over the arrangements for commissioning and providing inter-agency training continue to be a challenge. This issue is being considered by the Directors of Children’s services in Berkshire East who commissioned an analysis of local training arrangements. In addition, understandings of the definition of which staff and volunteers fall under ‘group 3’ varies between the three areas - this will be addressed in 2011/12.
- Child Protection - Munro’s final report on Child Protection is being considered by the LSCB and local arrangements may need to change in response to the findings of the report. This will be addressed by the LSCB Executive Board in 2011/12.
- Membership - due to the restructure of the LSCB Board and Executive in 2010/11 the LSCB has not recruited Lay members to join the membership of the LSCB, nor has it formalised membership arrangements for the Lead Member of Children’s Services in the Council. In light of recent national changes in guidance, these decisions need to be reviewed.

## **Feedback to, and challenge of, the Children and Young People’s Partnership (CYPP)**

This section looks at what is working well locally and what changes should be made to local services or their priorities. In summary the LSCB recommends the following actions from the Children and Young Peoples’ Partnership:

<b>Area of consideration</b>	<b>Action requested</b>
Section 11 development areas	To ensure that organisations that are commissioned to provide services to children and young people or families in the borough, have completed a satisfactory Section 11 self-assessment.
Shared Processes & Children’s Workforce Strategy	The Shared Processes and Children’s Workforce Strategy sub-groups are asked to note the development areas relating to Information Sharing and Safer Workforce practice and ensure that appropriate support/resources are made available locally to the children’s workforce.
Child Death Overview Panel and IMR learning	That the learning from the Child Death Overview Panel’s analysis is noted and is used to specifically inform Public Health priorities.  That the learning from the IMRs is noted by the partnership and informs the CYP Partnership’s strategic priorities.

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<p>Ensuring Effectiveness (Quality Standards)</p>	<p>That the CYP Partnership notes the common safeguarding priorities and specifically ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sufficient child protection training is available to the workforce</li> <li>▪ Promote the involvement of children, young people, parents and carers in service design and delivery</li> <li>▪ Ensure that quality assurance in the partnership prioritise safeguarding.</li> </ul> <p>That the CYP Partnership notes the risks associated with the impact of reductions in service on the capacity of staff and volunteers to identify child protection concerns early and intervene to protect/safeguard children.</p> <p>That the CYP Partnership’s preparation for inspection gives specific attention to the review of partnership safeguarding responsibilities.</p>
<p>Performance Management</p>	<p>That the CYP Partnership notes that the LSCB is specifically monitoring the following safeguarding related performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of Sexual Offences against under 18s</li> <li>- Number of under-18 deaths</li> <li>- Number of enquiries to Children’s Social Care</li> <li>- Number of children with child protection plans</li> <li>- Number of re-referrals to Children’s Social Care.</li> </ul>

The LSCB awaits a report from the CYP Partnership in March 2012 on the Partnership’s progress with responding to the LSCB’s recommendations.