

Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board Newsletter


Update from the Chair...



Welcome to the PSCB March newsletter, where we welcome Alison Jeffery as Portsmouth City Council's new Director of Children Services and Tina Scarborough as Portsmouth CCG's Head of Safeguarding and Patient Safety.

On 10th March the PSCB held its annual review and development day. This was a valuable opportunity to check our progress and make sure our attention is on the right things for the coming year. We were assisted by a total of 14 children and young people from Portsmouth schools and the Children in Care Council. Their contributions to discussions were, not surprisingly, the most useful of the day and highly inspiring.

I hope you find the newsletter informative. Please do let us know of items you would like to see in future issues.



Meet new members of the Board...

Tina Scarborough

The board is delighted to welcome Tina Scarborough as the new Head of Safeguarding and Patient Safety for Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Tina will be actively involved with the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board. It is an exciting new role which includes nurse leadership, safeguarding adults as well as children and patient safety.

Some aspects of the role are providing professional leadership, support and supervision related to safeguarding including ensuring systems are in place to monitor and seek assurance on the effectiveness of safeguarding across all commissioned Health Services in Portsmouth.



Meet new members of the Board ... Alison Jeffery

The board is also delighted to welcome Alison Jeffery who took up the post of Director of Children's Services on 4th January 2016.

Alison spent the first half of her career in DfE and predecessor bodies as a policy civil servant, mainly in the then Schools Directorate. She then moved to local government, initially at Brighton and Hove City Council and then to East Sussex County Council from 2000 to 2015. She worked on the creation of integrated Children's Services at East Sussex reporting to both the Directors of Education and Social Care, and was then a member of the Children's SMT for ten years. Her responsibilities in East Sussex included strategic and operational leadership of early help services, working with schools, social care and a wide range of other stakeholders, Children's Trust partnership arrangements, and the commissioning of children's public health services.



PSCB Development Afternoon 10 March 2016



10th March saw Board members come together with 14 young people aged 14-17 who either attend a secondary school in Portsmouth or are a member of the city's Youth Parliament or Children in Care Council.

The members spent the first half of the afternoon reviewing their progress during 2015-16 against the priorities in the Business Plan. The highlights have been:

- **Neglect:** a multi-agency audit of workers response to neglect which resulted in a single assessment tool for neglect being developed, that was launched alongside a guidance document for professionals to support their use of this [Neglect Identification & Measurement Tool](#)
- **Improving Communications:** the PSCB worked with the Adult Safeguarding Board to deliver a Safeguarding Week in June 2015, several learning opportunities were held during this week which highlighted key safeguarding messages to the 200 practitioners who attended these
- **Voice of the Child:** We partially funded the appointment of a local care leaver as an apprentice in a youth participation and engagement role for one year. This apprentice fulfilled a core role in championing and capturing the voice of the child
- **Tackling Exploitation & Abuse:** agencies have worked hard to improve the information shared about children most at risk and there is currently a significant amount of training being delivered to professionals to alert them to signs of abuse so potential victims can be identified earlier and appropriate support offered.

The young people then joined the group to tell the members what, from their perspective, are the key safeguarding issues they'd like to see the Board make a priority area for 2016-17.

'speaking to young people was really powerful. They were able to put our work into perspective... the young people were amazing and really made us think... contributions of young people was excellent and will really help to define business priorities'

Feedback from members about this session clearly describes how powerful it was and how well the young people were able to articulate the concerns and difficulties they face.

The concern that came through most strongly from the majority of young people was around bullying in all of its forms, either online, at school or in relationships. They felt the Board should be doing more to support schools in tackling this issue and in taking a zero tolerance approach, as well as providing support for the bullies to change their behaviour.

The Business Plan for 2014-17 is being currently being updated for next year by the committees based on the outcomes of this development afternoon and will shortly be published [here](#) on our website. The Board plans to send its Business Plan for 2016-17 to the young people who attended for their feedback.



Reforms to strengthen the approach to Local Authority Intervention

In December 2015, the Prime Minister announced a number of reforms to strengthen the approach to Local Authority intervention. The announcement also set out a number of further measures including an urgent review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and centralisation of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs). The fundamental review of the roles and functions of LSCBs began in January 2016 and will be completed in March 2016. It will be led by Alan



Wood, former President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services. He will look at the roles and functions of LSCBs within the context of local strategic multi-agency working, including the child death review process, and will consider how the intended centralisation of SCRs will work effectively at local level. As soon as we have more information this will be shared with you.

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Update on the changes to the Serious Crime Act (2015)

The Serious Crime Act (2015) was enacted on 29th December 2015 creating a new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships. The Home Office describes controlling or coercive behaviour as "a purposeful pattern of behaviour which takes place over time in order for one individual to exert power, control or coercion over another." Controlling behaviour is using a range of tactics in order to subordinate someone, or create a dependency, by isolating them from friends and family, removing their independence and any residence. Examples of controlling behaviour include preventing someone from seeing friends or family, monitoring them in person or via online communication tools or taking control of every aspect of their life from what they wear to where they go or when they can sleep. Coercive behaviour will also include the use of threats, violence, humiliation and intimidation with the aim of harming, punishing or frightening the victim. Threats may include threats of violence or threats against other people a victim cares about such as their children. Honour Based Violence (HBV) can also be covered by this legislation.

In order for the offence to be committed the controlling or coercive behaviour must be used on a repeated and ongoing basis and have had a "serious effect on the victim". This means the victim has been caused to either "fear that violence will be used against them on at least two occasions or they have been caused serious alarm or distress which has a substantial adverse effect on the victim." Until this is tested in the Courts it is unclear how this will be evidenced or measured. In addition perpetrators and their victims need to be "personally connected" i.e. they are in an intimate relationship or have lived together and have previously been in a relationship or are family members. The perpetrator must also know or "ought to know" that their behaviour would have a serious effect on the victim. There are other exemptions including those with learning disabilities or when a child is under 16 and the person using controlling behaviour has parental responsibility for the child.

Services will hold a range of evidence to support prosecutions within the information and records they hold i.e. medical records, social care records, housing records or school meeting minutes. The maximum penalty upon conviction is 5 years imprisonment and restraining orders are also available on acquittal.

For more information please visit the [Home Office guidance](#) or call the Early Intervention Project on 023 92 688472.



‘Intervene to Protect a Child’ Conference organised by Hampshire Constabulary

In January 500 police officers, teachers, youth and social workers across, Hampshire, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight and Southampton attended this event to learn more about looking out for the signs of child sexual exploitation.

Dr Joe Sullivan, Director of Mentor Forensic Services, presented his concept ‘Intervene to Protect a Child’ (IPC). He developed it in Texas, United States and in 2009 the Texas Rangers (a division of the Texas Department of Public Safety, TXDPS) launched the first IPC training course. The aim was to encourage officers who were already alert to the possibility of firearms, drugs and other criminality to also be more alert to possible child exploitation whilst on their patrols.

The concept has since been adapted for UK police and multi-agency partners by Durham Constabulary. Intervene to Protect sensitises frontline professionals to potential child exploitation by applying the principles of forensic behavioural analysis to their routine interactions. It enables police officers, social workers, teachers and others to explore a situation further in order to establish whether a child may be at risk.

Dr Sullivan said: “IPC training heightens the awareness of any individual who comes into contact with children in a professional capacity to indicators of abuse or exploitation. It is fantastic that Hampshire Constabulary is making children safer by building on the work of their colleagues in Durham, who were key partners in bringing this powerful training to the UK.” Other speakers included:

- A presentation of [Crashing](#), which is a hard-hitting Applied Theatre Production following the success of Chelsea’s Choice that has proven highly successful in raising awareness of the issues surrounding Child Sexual Exploitation
- The [BLAST](#) project. This is the only project in existence which specifically looks at boys as victims of CSE and the barriers to reporting
- Learning from [Serious Case Review into Child Sexual Exploitation in Oxfordshire](#) (linked to Operation Bullfinch) presented by Maggie Blyth, Chair of Hampshire, IOW and Oxfordshire Children’s Safeguarding Boards

Guidance on Information Sharing

Sharing information at the right time, with the right people, is key to keeping children & young people safe from harm. There is often confusion about what information can be shared about children and families, to whom and when. It is always good practice to gain an individual's consent to share information; however the law does allow us to share information in the absence of consent such as:

- when the gaining of that consent would place an individual at risk of harm;
- where the concerns are at a level to support a child protection enquiry; and
- when it is necessary for exercising statutory, governmental or other public functions.



All professionals who work with children & families must understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare. They must have a clear

understanding of what information can be shared within the relevant legal frameworks and we ask that all our Board Partners to ensure they have information sharing protocols in place, which include guidance on how to obtain consent to share.

Good record keeping is key to so much child protection and where low level concerns can become important later, then sharing low level concerns is permissible. However, in all circumstances consideration must be given to the issue of consent and if it's being disposed of the circumstances of the disclosure and the apparent credibility of the data should be recorded. Individuals should be told when information about them is being shared at the earliest/safest opportunity.

There is the following legislation and guidance on information sharing:

- The [Data Protection Act](#) is the foundation of good information sharing practice. It places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully. The Act is not a barrier to information sharing where a child is at risk.
- The [seven Caldicott principals](#) build on this, setting out the approach to the handling of information to protect patient confidentiality. In order to provide effective care for children, information often needs to be shared beyond the normal boundaries of health and social care services. The seventh Caldicott principle makes clear that the duty to share

- The Information Commissioner's Office [Data Sharing Code of Practice](#) explains how the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) applies to the sharing of personal data. It provides helpful checklists for data sharing and advice on privacy impact assessments and data sharing agreements.

In addition, the government has streamlined and simplified their approach to information sharing, and at the end of March 2015 they published their updated comprehensive package of information sharing guidance:

- Her Majesty's Government [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) statutory guidance which spells out the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and provides a clear framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services.
- [Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) is guidance for frontline practitioners and senior managers working with children, young people, parents and carers, who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case by case basis. This simplifies current legislation and guidance into six overarching principles, and dispels common information sharing myths.



PSCB Bereavement Audit

The Board is currently looking at bereavement services available to parents whose children (0-18) have died, either through accident, suicide or illness. If you have any information on services you are aware of within the city please contact the board directly.

PSCB Training Update

New PSCB Courses

PSCB is offering a new course on **Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking**. The aim of this course is to raise awareness of these issues and promote good practice across the workforce to identify and support children and young people at risk. Please see the link below to the Portsmouth SCB website for the link to the booking form.

Free E-learning courses

- **Basic Awareness Safeguarding Children course** - PSCB offers a Basic Awareness Safeguarding Children course which has recently been updated in line with national guidance. (we recommend that staff who are new to the workforce access the taught PSCB Basic Awareness course).
- **Basic Awareness Child Sexual Exploitation course** - This is a new e learning course being offered by PSCB to ensure the workforce in Portsmouth have an understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation and expected good practice to support children at risk.

For a login for either of the above courses, please contact pscctraining@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Other free e-learning courses:

- [Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\)](#)
- [Forced Marriage](#)
- [Prevent training](#)
- [Channel e-learning](#)

PSCB Training Booking processes

To book on one of our PSCB Safeguarding Training courses, please complete the PSCB Training Booking form which can be found [here](#) and return it to pscctraining@portsmouthcc.gov.uk.

We do not advertise dates for training as we need to ensure a multi-agency mix of delegates on each course. Once you return the booking form, you will be informed by email of the next available course date and time.

Safeguarding Training Records

It is the responsibility of all individual agencies to keep their own safeguarding training records for their staff. PSCB retain personal details of delegates for a short time only and then they are destroyed. PSCB keep information about numbers of delegates and organisations attending which we need for data purposes and evaluation.



Web: www.portsmouthscb.org.uk Email: pscctraining@portsmouthcc.gov.uk



The NSPCC Helpline has launched a new Whistleblowing Advice Line. This has been developed to provide support to employees wishing to raise concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in their own or other organisations.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line can be reached on 0800 028 0285.

The Home Office and Department for Education commissioned the NSPCC to manage the advice line after a firm commitment to do so was made by the Government in its Tackling CSE report in March 2015.

The advice line is not intended to replace any current practices or responsibilities of organisations working with children. The helpline advisors would encourage professionals to raise any concerns about a child to their own employer in the first instance. However, the advice line offers an alternative route if whistleblowing internally is difficult or professionals have concerns around how matters are being handled.

Some of the images in this publication have been downloaded free of charge from freedigitalphotos.net

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