

The Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2019-20
- Cover Report

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) is the organisation responsible for agreeing how services and agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in the borough and ensuring that they do so effectively. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 places the responsibility on the three 'Safeguarding Partners', the police; the local authority; and health, to formulate the local arrangements for partnership working to safeguard children in their own geographical area.
- 1.2 The Partnership, which replaced the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board from the beginning of April 2019, has an Independent Chair and brings together senior representatives from the key statutory, voluntary, and community sectors with a responsibility for delivering services to children and young people.
- 1.3 The Chair of the partnership is accountable to the three Safeguarding Partners, the Police, Health and the Local Authority (through the Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services). Each agency representative involved in the work of the Partnership is accountable to the governing body of their own agency, ensuring that safeguarding children remains high on the agenda across the area.
- 1.4 In the past, children's social care services in Barnsley were judged as requiring improvement by Ofsted and the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board had a significant governance role in ensuring that improvements continued to be implemented and embedded within the service. Ofsted re-inspected children's social care services in October 2018 resulting in a judgement of 'good'.
- 1.5 The Partnership continues to meet to ensure that:-
- children and families are getting the help they need, including early help
 - local services are doing what they should to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area
 - the quality of the work done is to the highest standards
 - lessons are learned from when children have been harmed to prevent it happening again in the future
 - local training is provided to help professionals to keep children safe

2.0 Current Position

- 2.1 The Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report 2019-20 (Item 5b - attached) outlines the work of the Partnership and its sub-groups over the last year and indicates its priorities and plans for continued improvement, It also shows how they try to include the voice of children, young people and families at every opportunity.

2.2 The governance structure of the Partnership is outlined on page seven of the report, which shows the seven sub-groups who ensure the work of the Partnership is carried forward. These groups are:-

- Performance Audit and Quality Assurance Sub-Group
- Child Exploitation Strategy Group
- Policy, Procedures and Workforce Practice & Development Sub-Group
- Child Death Overview Panel
- Neglect Sub-Group
- Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) Sub-Group
- Disability Sub-Group

2.3 It should be noted that Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs) replaced Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and this sub-committee was known as the SCR sub-committee under the previous arrangements for partnership working to safeguard children.

2.4 In the coming year (2020-21), the sub-groups plan to:-

- Let people know how to get help or report harm and provide children, young people, and their families who have been harmed with support and information
- Design and deliver effective training for all staff and volunteers
- Work across the partnership to understand and address the impact of Covid-19 in communities to identify and respond to hidden harm
- Evaluate children and young people's views of safeguarding and demonstrate if we have helped them to reduce risk
- Carry out LCSPRs and lessons learned reviews to improve the way children are kept safe
- Continue to provide performance information to the Partnership as an assurance that agencies are working together to prevent harm, and regularly challenge processes and performance at Board level to show all organisations are being held to account for the safety of children in Barnsley
- Strengthen the role of independent scrutiny of partnership arrangements through a peer review
- Identify any gaps for young people moving from children's to adult services that may leave them at risk of harm
- Ensure a joint response to shared themes

3.0 Covid-19

3.1 Covid-19 did not impact on the work of the Partnership in 2019–20 and they are pleased to report that:-

- The Partnership and its sub-groups continued to meet virtually throughout the lock down period
- Active work was undertaken to highlight the increased risks of domestic violence/abuse and online safety and other safeguarding concerns was completed by both BMBC and other partners' communications teams
- The Safeguarding Partnership website was regularly updated with guidance as published by Central Government and other local and national agencies
- The independent chair of the Partnership was party to the weekly calls with the Chief Executive about Covid-19
- Virtual training was delivered to front line workers

- Links were maintained with safeguarding colleagues both locally, sub-regionally and regionally
- The Partnership received updates from all partners about how they were continuing to keep children safe and respond to allegations of abuse and neglect
- To facilitate this further, BMBC and Partners have maintained a Vulnerable Children Tracker, which has helped to keep the focus on our most vulnerable children and families to ensure they are seen and supported as much as possible. Barnsley are the only authority in the country to have gone to this length and it has been considered nationally as an exemplar
- The Partnership Manager has been in weekly contact with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in all schools, colleges and academies in the borough throughout lockdown to offer support with any children and young people presenting as particularly vulnerable or not seen by any other agency, to help coordinate an appropriate response and where necessary, escalate to senior management. This has been very well received and where appropriate, partners have been co-ordinated to ensure that children are seen and concerns addressed. Again, the Partnership are not aware of any other authority going to this extent to ensure that vulnerable children and families are kept on the appropriate service's radar

4.0 Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Consultation with Local Young People

- 4.1 On Monday 3rd August 2020, OSC Members met virtually with representatives from Barnsley Youth Council, Care4Us Council and Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Forum. This was to find out how young people in Barnsley have found lockdown and the impact of Covid-19, as well as gather their thoughts on relevant services on the OSC work programme during 2020-21.
- 4.2 The main safeguarding issue raised by local young people was bullying. This was mentioned by a number of young people both from personal experience as well as on behalf of a number of their peers. Young people expressed concerns about the long term impact bullying has, such as damaging people's confidence going into higher education and the workplace.
- 4.3 For some young people, not being at school during lockdown had been a nice break from daily bullying. Some young people felt that schools needed to re-prioritise this issue, especially as they felt it was not always being picked up on in schools and tackled. The young people reported mixed experiences in how schools handle bullying, some of which were positive, including specially trained staff and support services; however, this was not consistent across all schools.

5.0 Invited Witnesses

- 5.1 At today's meeting, a number of Partnership representatives have been invited to answer questions from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding their work over the last annual reporting year (April 2019-March 2020), as well as work being undertaken currently and future plans:-
- Bob Dyson, Independent Chair, BSCP
 - Mel John-Ross, Executive Director, Children's Services, BMBC
 - Debbie Mercer, Service Director, Children's Social Care & Safeguarding, BMBC
 - Nigel Leeder, Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership Manager, BMBC
 - Cllr Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Spokesperson – Children's Services

- Chief Superintendent Sarah Poolman, Barnsley District Commander, South Yorkshire Police (SYP)
- Tracy-Ann Taylor, Named Nurse Safeguarding Children, Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (BHNFT)
- Angela Fawcett, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children, Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Emma Cox, Assistant Director of Nursing, Quality & Professions, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SWYPFT)

6.0 Possible Areas for Investigation

6.1 Members may wish to ask questions around the following areas:

- What are the good news stories for 2019-20 and how do they improve outcomes for children in the borough?
- What changes have been made as a result of changing from a 'Board' to a 'Partnership' and how are these arrangements bedding in?
- How effective are the partnership working arrangements? Do all partners contribute equally?
- How do you ensure that 'the voice of the child' influences the work of the partnership and what evidence is there of this?
- What impact have changes in key officers had on the partnership?
- What approach do partners take to understand and respond to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families, such as their peers neighbourhoods, schools and online?
- How do you ensure that children develop the right tools, such as confidence and resilience, to reduce their chances of being exploited or becoming vulnerable?
- What is being done by the Partnership to tackle bullying and support schools in Barnsley, especially given the concerns raised by local young people?
- How confident are you that staff have the time and skills to be curious and persistent with those children who are hard to reach?
- Can you give us an example of any issues that were highlighted as a result of the audits conducted this year and how you intend to remedy them?
- Does the Partnership consider gambling to be hidden harm for vulnerable children?
- How do you demonstrate that the work of the Partnership is value for money?
- What actions could be taken by Members to assist in the work of Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership?

7.0 Background Papers and Useful Links

- BSCP Annual Report 2018-19 (Item 5b - attached)

- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership New Arrangements and Implementing the Requirements of Working Together 2018:-
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/10311/barnsley-safeguarding-children-partnership-implementation-document.pdf>
- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Website:-
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/safeguarding-families-in-barnsley/safeguarding-children-in-barnsley/>

8.0 Glossary

BHNFT	Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
BSCP	Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CE	Child Exploitation
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
LCSPR	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews
OSC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
SCRs	Serious Case Reviews
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
SWYPFT	South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
SYP	South Yorkshire Police

9.0 Officer Contact

Anna Marshall, Scrutiny Officer
28 August 2020