

Central Bedfordshire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board

**Contains Confidential
or Exempt Information** No.

Title of Report The responsibilities of all agencies for safeguarding children and young people

Meeting Date: 5 July 2012

Responsible Officer(s) Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services

Presented by: Yolanda Corden, Interim Assistant Director, Operations

Action Required: The Board is asked to:

- 1. Note the requirements on all agencies to ensure the protection of children.**
- 2. Ask agencies to provide assurances that these responsibilities are being met.**
- 3. Consider whether the Board requires further information to ensure that its members are sufficiently informed about children's safeguarding activity within Central Bedfordshire and the support and advice available.**

Executive Summary

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| 1. | This report provides information concerning the statutory responsibilities of all agencies for the protection of children. It asks the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board to assume responsibility for ensuring that members of the Board are conversant with their safeguarding responsibilities and that agencies are able to provide assurances that procedures are in place to ensure that these responsibilities are being met. |
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Background

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| 2. | The report sets out the safeguarding principles contained within The Children Act 2004 and the responsibilities of all agencies working with children set out in "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2010). |
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Detailed Recommendation	
3.	The Children Act 2004 established the following principles:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A duty to cooperate to improve the well being of children and young people.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of the role of Director of Children’s Services.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identification of a Lead Member for Children’s Services.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, with statutorily defined membership.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of Children’s Trust Boards.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powers of intervention by Government where local authorities were found, in inspection, to be failing to adequately safeguard children.
4.	<p>“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2010) is a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It sets out the responsibilities of all agencies working with children, and provides guidance for practitioners and frontline managers who have particular responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This guidance states that all organisations that provide services or work with children and young people should:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have senior managers who are committed to children’s and young people’s welfare and safety;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be clear about people’s responsibilities to safeguard and promote children’s and young people’s welfare;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check that there are no known reasons or information available that would prevent staff and volunteers from working with children and young people;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure staff get training that helps them do their job well;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have procedures about how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people; and
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have agreements about working with other organisations.
5.	All agencies working with children are required take account of Part 1 (chapters 1 to 8) which constitutes statutory guidance. Part 2 of the document (chapters 9 to 12) provides non-statutory practice guidance.

The Roles of the Director of Children’s Services and Lead Member for Children’s Services

6.	The Children Act 2004 requires a local authority to appoint a Director of Children’s Services (DCS) and to designate a Lead Member for Children’s Services (LMCS). The Act also requires local authorities and statutory partners to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they take full account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
7.	The DCS and LMCS together provide a clear line of local accountability and support for effective interagency and partnership working. A key role is to ensure clarity about child protection systems, ensuring that professional leadership and practice is robust and can be challenged on a regular basis.
8.	The responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS include working with agencies and assuring the adequacy and effectiveness of local partnership arrangements and their respective accountabilities e.g. with schools, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), the courts, the Children’s Trust, Health and Wellbeing Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Offending Team Partnerships, Police, Probation, Multi-Agency Public Protection arrangements and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.
9.	As a statutory member of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the DCS has a clear role in ensuring that safeguarding is integral to the work of all partners, as well as influencing the development of the joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board

10.	The Local Authority is required to set up a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to coordinate the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in that area. The Central Bedfordshire LSCB has an independent chair; the DCS is a member of the LSCB.
11.	The work of the LSCB is set out in its Annual Business Plan. The LSCB reports its business to the Children’s Trust Board and must also produce an Annual Report. This report is scheduled to come to the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board on 6 September 2012.

Conclusion and next steps

12.	Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to ensure that all partners are fully conversant with the requirements of “Working Together to Safeguard Children” and are able to provide assurances that these responsibilities are being met.
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13.	The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to consider whether it needs further information to ensure that its members are sufficiently informed about children's safeguarding activity within Central Bedfordshire and the support and advice available.
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Issues

Strategy Implications

14.	This proposal relates to the draft priorities in the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy for ensuring the health and wellbeing of children and young people and for early intervention and prevention.
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15.	This proposal is closely aligned with Priority 2 of the Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014: Protecting children and keep them safe.
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Governance & Delivery

16.	Agencies are asked to provide assurances to the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board that they have robust procedures in place to ensure the protection of children and young people.
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Management Responsibility

17.	Responsibility for ensuring that procedures are in place to ensure the protection of children rests with each individual agency.
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Risk Analysis

Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Actions to Manage Risk
Significant harm to children or young people	3	4	Procedures are in place within all agencies working with children and young people to ensure compliance with the requirements of "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2010).

Source Documents	Location (including url where possible)
"Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2010)	http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk