

GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Wednesday 25 September 2013
Agenda Item 2.3

Name of Paper / Report	Annual Report 2012-2013 Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children's Board				
Lead Author	Sally Rogers Registered Nurse on Governing Body				
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Governing Body Sponsor	Sally Rogers				
Supporting healthy lifestyles and reducing health inequalities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reducing premature mortality	Focussing on local needs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Managing our resources	Corporate development	
Purpose of Paper / Report	For information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Exec Summary	<p>The Governing Body received a Safeguarding Children's report in May 2013 which focussed specifically on issues for NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group.</p> <p>The Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) is also required by statute to produce an Annual report.</p> <p>This is appended for information.</p>				
Recommendations	<p>The Governing Body is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the content and findings of the report 				
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Annual Report will be made available on the CCG's website 				

Annual Report 2012-2013

Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children's Board

1. Background

- 1.1 The Governing Body of NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) received a Safeguarding Children's report in May 2013¹ which focussed specifically on issues for the CCG.
- 1.2 The Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)² is also required by statute to produce an Annual report.³ This is appended to this cover paper for information.
- 1.3 The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED)⁴ inspection regime is changing and there will be more focus on how well agencies are working together.
- 1.4 A new independent chair for the LSCB has been appointed and LSCB members will be expected to play a more active role.

2. Findings of the report

- 2.1 Earlier in the year OFSTED completed an unannounced inspection of Cheshire East's Children's Services which identified areas for improvement and lessons to be learnt for all partners who make up the membership of LSCB. These areas are identified on page 13 of the Annual Report and are as follows:
 - the council has done a lot of work to make services better in order to keep children safe but sometimes progress has been too slow and could be faster
 - some cases of children who were at possibly risk of harm were not always considered carefully enough when they were referred to social workers. This meant that sometimes decisions and actions to find out more about their situations were not taken at all or not taken quickly enough
 - some children in need plans that describe how children are to be helped and supported are not clear or checked well enough. Also not all children who have these plans are visited regularly to check that they are well and that they are safe
 - all the agencies work well together to make sure that children and young people who have a child protection plan are helped and that they are safe
 - children, young people and their families are not always asked about their views or opinions. This makes it harder for the council to know how to improve services to make sure children are getting the services they need

¹ <https://www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk/Governing-Body/29th-may-2013.htm>

² http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social_care_and_health/children_and_families/lscb_-_safeguarding_children.aspx

³ <http://www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/Links/Safeguarding/SafeguardingchildrenboardAnnualReport2012-13.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>

- the ways in which managers check that work is being done and written down properly varies a lot and need improving
- the council and other agencies need to think carefully about the different communities living in Cheshire East and make sure that children from all these groups are supported by services that understand their needs.

2.2 A number of actions were identified as a result of the inspection. These actions are to be combined with findings from other inspections and reviews into a Single Improvement Plan, and the implementation of this plan will be overseen by an Improvement Board with an external Chairperson. Progress is already being made against the actions identified within the plan

2.3 The following outcomes will be pursued in the areas where it has been identified that improvement must be made:

- front line social work practice is consistently good and effective
- the quality and impact of practice is measurably improved across Cheshire East through effective communication, challenge and scrutiny from the LSCB, Children's Trust, Senior Managers and Members
- the voice of the child is fully embedded in service planning and delivery
- there is an effective 'front door' in place to services for children and families. Staff in all agencies have a clear understanding of levels of need to provide the right response at the right time
- there is effective multi-agency delivery of Early Help
- partners, in particular Health, commit to change

2.4 One of the priorities for this coming year for the LSCB is to improve the LSCB's effectiveness and its understanding of the effectiveness of partners safeguarding activity.

3. Role of NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group

3.1 As a member of the Cheshire East LSCB the CCG is committed towards our statutory role in ensuring that the children and young people of Eastern Cheshire remain safe.

3.2 The Governing Body heard in July 2013 how the CCG has increased funding to expand the Looked After Children's team⁵. The CCG has also continued to contribute to the funding of the LSCB.

3.3 The CCG is now represented on and actively involved in the work of the Board and all of its sub groups. The CCG is represented on the Board by Jacki Wilkes, Head of Clinical Developments and Health Outcomes.

⁵ <https://www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/Governing-Body/Meetings/2013-07-31/2.1%20-%20Cared%20For%20Children.pdf>

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Governing Body is asked to:

- note this report for information

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Annual Report 2012-13



Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children Board

*'... the effectiveness of child safeguarding and
promoting the welfare of children in the local area.'*
Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013

What is this report?

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are local partnerships of agencies working together to ensure the co-ordination and effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children – to keep children safe from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

LSCBs are required to produce an Annual Report (Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009) on the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children.

In this report you can read:-

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Introduction by Independent Chair

It is my pleasure to introduce the annual report of the Cheshire East LSCB for the period 2012 – 13. In this report you will see what our statutory and voluntary agencies have been doing to ensure that children and young people are effectively protected in our area. This report also summarises what we see as our key challenges in the coming 12 months and beyond, as well as providing some of the important detail about how the safeguarding system works in our area, and how we are seeking to improve it.

The period reviewed in this report, 2012 – 13, has seen major and continuing concerns nationally about the abuse and children of young people. The allegations against Jimmy Savile and their aftermath, continuing high profile concerns about child sexual exploitation, historical abuse in residential care homes and schools, all continue to make the protection of children and young people a national concern and priority. It is one of the key roles of the LSCB to ensure that the safeguarding of children and young people continues to be the highest priority for all agencies in Cheshire East.

During the period covered by this annual report, in March 2013, OFSTED conducted a safeguarding inspection in Cheshire East. Whilst some of our work was seen as working satisfactorily, the overall conclusion, in OFSTED's terminology, was that we were "inadequate" and need to make improvements in a number of areas. Some of the key findings, and the way in which they will link to our future priorities, are referenced in this report.

Though the inspection findings were disappointing, they are accepted in full and the LSCB and its partners are determined to bring about the required improvements as quickly as possible. It is important to emphasise here that the inspection regime for safeguarding nationally is changing, becoming even more searching, and will increasingly focus on examining a child and young persons "journey" through a whole range of services. The central focus on future inspections will be, quite rightly, on how well all agencies are working together, not just individually, to ensure effective protection and support for children and young people.

The LSCB and myself would like to place on record our heartfelt thanks to the frontline workers in all statutory and voluntary organisations in Cheshire East for their continuing efforts. It is they who, on a daily basis, are the real "safeguarding system".

I hope you find this report informative.

Ian Rush

Acting Independent Chair – Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board

What are the arrangements to safeguard children?

In England and Wales, services to safeguard and promote children's welfare are mainly governed by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. These pieces of legislation say that a child is the primary responsibility of their parents or carers, but that public services should intervene if a child is at risk or suffering abuse or neglect.

Child Protection is the specific arrangements for the way that public agencies respond when there is a concern that a child is at risk of **significant harm** as a result of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The rules for how this is done is set out in Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010, and revised from April 2013). These are supported by wider arrangements for **Safeguarding**, promoting children's welfare and reducing the risk that they would need Child Protection intervention.

All public services should have regard for the safeguarding of children, especially those that deliver services directly to children, and some have specialist services

Children are safeguarded in a number of ways:-

1. **Safer Working** - Children receive services in a safe social environment, they should not be at risk from the professional who work with them because background checks have been done and there are clear rules for the way professionals should behave towards children.
2. **Early Help** - General and targeted support to children and families helps deal with difficulties early to prevent them building into more serious problems. This may for example include support to children struggling at school or support for parents suffering domestic violence.
3. **Identification and Referral** - Identifying children who are at risk of significant harm, and referring them to the Child Protection system.
4. **Child Protection** - Assessing and managing risks through the Child Protection system or if it is not possible to reduce the risk of significant harm whilst a child remains with at home, a child may be cared for elsewhere, for example in foster care.

These measures involve lots of agencies working together. Some agencies have specialist staff and services, for example the Local Authority has social workers, foster placements, residential homes, parenting programmes, etc. and the Police have specialist child protection officers and facilities for interviewing children who have been abused. Other agencies may have staff who have some safeguarding duties alongside their own job, e.g. teachers. All staff have a role to play in looking out for the signs of abuse and neglect, and in passing on any concerns.

All these arrangements are overseen by the LSCB, must make sure that services for children are co-operating together and have high standards for protecting children.

The LSCB is also responsible for making sure that as many staff in all agencies as possible are trained to notice signs of possible abuse and neglect, to take action, and to support children and young people within the Child Protection process.

How are safeguarding arrangements making children safer?

Safer working

The last year has seen the passing of the Protection of Freedoms Act, and the creation of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to replace the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The LSCB has hosted a DBS workshop, and has been monitoring national developments closely for their local implications.

The LSCB's Safer Working Group has responded to issues such as child employment, schools transport, schools recruitment, and sports coaches, to ensure that safeguarding policies are being followed.

All LSCB partner agencies are expected to implement safer recruitment processes. This has been confirmed through an audit but not within the last year, so it is intended to repeat the audit in the next year now that changes brought about through the Disclosure and Barring Service have arrived.

Local Authority Designated Officer

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) oversees cases of allegations and concerns of suitability of people who work with children, and this post is now part-funded by the LSCB.

There were 205 contacts to the LADO service in 2012-2013 to raise concerns. 127 were dealt with through consultation and advice, and 78 cases were of sufficient seriousness for the LADO service to consider or oversee investigations (there were 84 cases in 2011-12). Of these 78 cases the highest number involved Education staff (3200, Foster Carers (14), residential unit staff (8) and Early Years workers (7). 49% of the concerns reported to the LADO were of allegations of physical harm and 39% were concerns about suitability of adults to work with children. 60 of these investigations were completed within the year, with the following outcomes:-

Cessation of Use	2
Disciplinary	3
Non Disciplinary Action	5
Dismissal	2
No action/NFA	27
Employer Risk Assessment	2
Resignation	6
Training Needs identified	13
TOTAL	60

Thirty seven designated senior managers have attended LCSB Allegations Management Training, with Education being the agency most well represented. (28 managers were also trained just before the start of the year)

Local Authority Designated Officer provides a separate Annual Report to the LSCB

How are safeguarding arrangements making children safer?

Early Help

Eleanor Roaf, out-going LSCB Independent Chair 2011-12, final report

'...the Early Help offer is clearly going to be of great interest to the LSCB... It is vital that universal as well as targeted services are fully engaged with this work, and this means that the role of schools and health services must be clearly understood by themselves and other partners.'

Services can work together as a team to support a child with difficulties that are not sufficiently serious to warrant a Child Protection referral to Children's Social Care. This may prevent those difficulties from escalating into much more damaging problems – this is described as 'Early Help,' an initiative that is overseen by Cheshire East Children's Trust through its Early Help Strategy. One indicator of success is that number of children requiring statutory Child Protection intervention (Report to the CE LSCB 25/1/13)

Services working together to support a child often make use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to assess, plan and co-ordinate an offer of Early Help. There were 463 new common assessments during the period April 2012 to 31st December 2013. A survey of cases conducted between April and December 2012 reported that CAF is well regarded by families and they report progress with their issues as a result of CAF in the majority of cases, and that

- 93% parents thought that CAF had helped 'quite a lot' or 'a great deal'
- 94% children thought that CAF had helped 'quite a lot' or 'a great deal'
- 88% practitioners reported that the impact of CAF was 'positive' or 'very positive'

However, it is not yet clear whether CAF is in reducing the need for referrals to Children's Social Care and Child Protection interventions (Report to the CE LSCB 25/1/13).

Cheshire East Children's Social Care has highlighted the need to improve the appropriateness of referrals for safeguarding so that unnecessary referrals of children are avoided where possible. This will require greater multi-agency working to support children with 'lower level' problems.

Health & Well Being Board

The Health & Well-Being Board has been in development during 2012-13, and will be a significant strategic partner for the LSCB in future.

How are safeguarding arrangements making children safer?

Identification and Referral

***'Professionals working in universal services have a responsibility to identify the symptoms and triggers of abuse and neglect, to share that information and work together to provide children and young people with the help they need.'* (Working Together 2013, chapter 1, para 6)**

It is very important that the right children receive the right help at the right time – children most at risk must be identified and referred so that their needs can be assessed and plans can be made to minimise risks they face.

It is expected that all agencies that deliver services to children and families, and to adults who are parents or carers, have in place policies and systems in place, and staff trained to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns.

The LSCB's Basic Awareness training aims to provide basic information about safeguarding including types of abuse, signs, indicators and Circumstances, and what to do if there is a concern that a child is being abused. Eight courses were delivered to xxx practitioners, and feedback some time after training has confirmed that practitioners are more confident about recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns.

The LSCB's Training & Development Group also Quality Assures Basic Awareness courses that are delivered in-house by any partner agency.

Each partner agency within Cheshire East LSCB is expected to ensure their, for example:-

Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – Safeguarding Audit report 2012-13

- *Increased recognition of safeguarding issues / concerns by MCHFT staff.*
- *Safeguarding concerns now recognized throughout the Trust; not just Paediatrics – everybody's business!*
- *Increased levels of appropriate responses by MCHFT staff.*

Training

LSCB's multi-agency Training Programme includes Basic Awareness, and 8 sessions were delivered for 25 people from a range of agencies. The Basic Awareness programme aims to give staff an understanding of the types of abuse, and of what to do if there are worries a child may be being abused. The LSCB's Training and Development sub-group also quality assures single-agency Safeguarding training to ensure that the same messages are delivered to a high standard.

A separate Annual Report for the Multi-agency Training Programme is being provided for the LSCB

Referrals

Adopting safeguarding policies and procedures, raising awareness, and training staff all aim to ensure that when children are suffering harm or are at risk, they are identified and referred to Children's Social Care.

In 2012-13, there were over 2300 referrals which were a request for a social care service, though not necessarily in relation to a Child Protection issues. The largest proportions of referrals came from Police (23%), 11% Education (11%) and Health referrals (12.5%, with the biggest contributor here being Hospitals/A&E at 6%).

Audits of work coming into the Children's Assessment Team (CAT) team has shown that at least 50% of the referrals are not at a level of need that requires a statutory social care response. These referrals have to be investigated and recorded within the Social Care system and absorb resources that more appropriately could be used to protect young people with the highest levels of need. (CE LSCB report, 25/1/2013). In some cases this may also mean unnecessary and stressful intrusions into families' lives. Children's Social Care started 622 enquiries under S.47 of the Children Act 1989 to ascertain whether a child was suffering, or was at risk of, significant harm.

In response to these issues, Children's Social Care have consulted with referring agencies and are developing a new model for responding to and dealing with concerns about children from other agencies. The new arrangement, 'Cheshire East Consultation Service' is due to go live in April 2013.

The Early Help Strategy referenced above is also intended in the long run result in a decrease the number of contacts made to Children's Social Care, and increase the percentage of referrals to Children's Social Care going on to initial assessment. The LSCB's Performance Management and Quality Sub-Group will be monitoring these indicators.

How are safeguarding arrangements making children safer?

Child Protection

Once Child Protection and safeguarding concerns have been identified, their needs must be assessed and plans to reduce risk and promote their welfare must be put in place.

In 2012-13, there were

- 622 enquiries (S.47 Children Act 1989) made about the safety of children (not all go on to be subject to Child Protection Plans, as some enquiries find that risk is not significant, or the child's circumstances change during (sometimes because of) the enquiry). This equates to 83.0 per 10,000 which is slightly less than the same rate last year. Whilst significantly lower than the northwest rate of 95.2 in 2011-12 it is still broadly comparable with our statistical neighbours who had an average of 89.8 but varied from 68.2 to 117.4 per 10,000 in 2011-12
- 239 children had Multi-agency Child Protection Plans put in place, an increase from the previous year when there was 222. 34 of Child Protection Plans were for a second or subsequent time. This equates to 14% and is less than the northwest average last year of 15.3% and slightly higher than stat neighbour average of 13.7%. On average over the year there were 188 children with a Child Protection Plan at any one time. This is a smaller proportion of the overall child population than most other comparable Local Authority area ('statistical neighbours')
- As at 31/3/13 – there were 161 children subject to a CP plan. This equates to 21.5 per 10,000 which is substantially lower than stat neighbour average of 36 last year and NW average of 42.6 last year
- As at 31/3/2013 the percentage categories of plans were as follows – 63% Neglect, 32% Emotional Abuse, 2.5% sexual abuse, 2.5% Physical abuse (though a child may be at risk from more than one type of abuse). The northwest average last year was 40.9% neglect, 30.8% Emotional, 4.8% sexual abuse, 13.4 % physical abuse, 10% multiple abuse
- As at 31/3/2013 81% of children had been subject to a plan for 12 months or less, and 17% who have been subject to a plan for over 18 months.
- In total 288 children left a child protection plan with 77% ending because the child was assessed as no longer at risk because interventions have worked or circumstances have changed
- 76 children were admitted to the care of the local authority because of abuse or neglect (compared to 85 in 2011-12), and a further 48 as a result of family problems, and 2 because of a child's disability (total 126).
- 189 children left care during the course of the year, while the overall there was a steady decline in the number of cared for children from 432 in April 2012 to 376 in March 2013.

When children enter the Child Protection system, it appears to be effective. However, the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements to Protect Children (see page 12) said identified some weaknesses in the response to children:-

- lack of consistency of first response when a child is referred in need of support or safeguarding
- multiple access points for agencies to refer which prevents effective quality management
- lack of effective consultation and support to agencies at the point of first contact to achieve an appropriate response.

Audit findings

Over the last year there have 5 cases that have undergone multi-agency audit using the systems methodology and one case taken through a reflective review process.

The common themes to emerge as significant from these and reported to the Board are:

Obstacles to effective multi-agency safeguarding in Cheshire East:

- Changes of key worker
- Poor or no assessment of level of parents understanding/learning / cognitive ability
- Lack of consideration of significance of history
- A child protection process that parents do not feel engaged with or reflects the experience of the child or the impact and outcomes for them
- The need to reflect the difference between the professional's experience of the child and the child's own experience.
- Multiple ways to refer families in – inconsistency of response
- Identification of risk factors and then subsequent planning not outcomes focussed
- The lack of professionals understanding that families can think child protection means – baby Peter

Positive factors to enhance effective multi-agency safeguarding in Cheshire East

- Services that could model expected change and keep modelling it practical not just theoretical
- Appropriate and timely information sharing
- All agencies give priority to child protection work
- Independent over-sight of multi-agency working

Specific areas of protection

Missing from Home & Care - During the last 12 months there have been some significant changes introduced to impact on the figures and improve the service to these vulnerable children:

- 292 individual children and young people were involved in a total of 497 instances of being missing. 311 of these missing instances were from a family home, while 181 from a Care setting (for children cared for by Cheshire East 43 children were involved in 80 instances of being missing). As a definition of 'Missing' changed, data from the previous year is not comparable.
- A Pan-Cheshire protocol has been implemented which gives clarity to the criteria and sets out the expectations on the providers when children go missing from Care

- There has been a multi-agency drive – particularly in the police to improve the service to this vulnerable group, including a multi-agency sub group and a Pan-Cheshire strategic steering group
- An independent service for ‘return home’ interviews has been commissioned
- A systematic multi-agency process for managing the risk for children at risk of child sexual exploitation has been stood up.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – this issue has been highlighted by prosecutions and enquiries in other areas, and by Government Action Plans. Cheshire East has established a multi-agency approach holding CSE Conferences to co-ordinate support and put a risk management plan in place.

At the beginning of the year, there were 5 young people who had been subject to a CSE Conference resulting in a CSE risk management plan, and a further 8 young people went through this process in the course of the year. Also, for 6 young people who had CSE plans, it was decided that they were no longer required as the risks had diminished. CSE is, however, a relatively new focus of safeguarding activity for Cheshire East and it is difficult to know how much might be happening that requires intervention. The LSCB delivered three CSE training courses attended by 76 professionals, and other communications are planned to raise awareness of CSE amongst professionals and the public. There is general recognition of a gap for a specific service that would work directly with young people where CSE is an issue.

Neglect – nearly two-thirds of all Child Protection Plans are made in order to address the neglect of a child. Neglect is a failure to meet a child’s essential needs over a significant period of time, and can be evident in a wide variety of ways. It can be difficult for practitioners to decide when a level of neglect should be regarded as serious, and also parents to understand why others have concerns. The LSCB is promoting the use of the Neglect Graded Care Profile (GCP) tool to help both practitioners and parents understand different levels of neglect right across the spectrum of a child’s needs. The GCP has been taken up by practitioners, particularly in community health, and anecdotal evidence is that its use is having a positive impact, though this has not yet shown a reduction in the overall numbers of Child Protection Plans in relation to Neglect.

We would like to see a reduction in the overall numbers of Child Protection Plans in relation to Neglect and Child Protection Plans for neglect being for shorter durations, though evidence is not forthcoming yet.

Domestic Abuse – the increase in Childs Protection Plans in the category of Emotional Abuse may in part be a result of the recognition of the impact of children’s exposure to domestic violence and abuse. Adult victims of domestic abuse (predominantly but not exclusively women) are protected through a process called a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and where these victims are parents, this can support a parent in protecting their child – a total of 329 children were involved with families discussed at MARAC. Children’s Social Care are in attendance at MARAC to share information on known cases or to pick up issues where there are concerns that a child is not safe, and the Safeguarding Children in Educations and Settings (SCIES) team provides a link with schools and may also provide one-to-one support for children. SCIES also provides group work and support for schools to help raise pupils’ awareness of healthy and abusive relationships.

A separate Annual Report for the Safeguarding Children in Educations and Settings is being provided for the LSCB.

At a strategic level there are now much closer working relationships between the LSCB and Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Partnership

How are safeguarding arrangements making children safer?

What did Inspectors and Reviews say?

In July 2012, Ofsted inspected Cheshire East Fostering Service, and judged that Cheshire East was 'adequate' at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Cheshire East Adoption Service was inspected in December 2012, and the judgement on keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe was 'good.'

In December 2012, Cheshire East Children's Services invited the Local Government Association to carry out a Peer Review of Safeguarding Children Services.

LGA Peer Review Team, feedback letter January 2013

'We found that the commitment to improve outcomes for children was apparent in both Cheshire East Council and across the wider partnership. Members, officers and partners demonstrated that the needs of the children were at the forefront of their work.'

The Peer Review also commented that change must happen at a much greater pace, and made a number of recommendations that were brought together with those from other inspections and reviews.

Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements to Protect Children

In March 2013, Ofsted conducted a two-week unannounced Inspection of child protection arrangements. They judged that the overall effectiveness of these arrangements was **inadequate**, because some of the areas of frontline practice were not consistent in doing what is required to keep children and young people safe. However, Ofsted did find that the effectiveness of the help and protection provided to children, young people, families and carers, and leadership and governance were felt to be adequate.

Ofsted's **Summary Report for Children and Young people** identified the following as generally adequate:-

- ***When children are at risk of immediate harm, quick action is taken with the help of other services to make sure they are protected.***
- ***When children and their families need help at an early stage, the council and other organisations work well together to support them to make life their lives better. Children's centres, family centres, schools and other local services give good advice and help to parents who are having difficulties in looking after their children.***
- ***Early help and support to older children and young people is generally good and so fewer young people are involved in anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhoods or are getting into trouble with the police, and school attendance and behaviour is getting better. If a child or young person goes missing, local services and the police have good systems in place to make sure they return home safely.***
- ***Social workers, family service workers and other staff who work with children and their families receive regular and effective training and support so that they can do their job well and ensure children are safe.***

- ***Good joint working between the council and lots of different services makes sure that support is available and in many instances this prevents problems from getting worse.***

Things needing improvement were summarised in the Ofsted Children & Young People's Report as

- ***The council has done a lot of work to make services better in order to keep children safe but sometimes progress has been too slow and could be faster.***
- ***Some cases of children who were at possibly risk of harm were not always considered carefully enough when they were referred to social workers. This meant that sometimes decisions and actions to find out more about their situations were not taken at all or not taken quickly enough.***
- ***Some children in need plans that describe how children are to be helped and supported are not clear or checked well enough. Also not all children who have these plans are visited regularly to check that they are well and that they are safe.***
- ***All the agencies work well together to make sure that children and young people who have a child protection plan are helped and that they are safe.***
- ***Children, young people and their families are not always asked about their views or opinions. This makes it harder for the council to know how to improve services to make sure children are getting the services they need.***
- ***The ways in which managers check that work is being done and written down properly varies a lot and need improving.***
- ***The council and other agencies need to think carefully about the different communities living in Cheshire East and make sure that children from all these groups are supported by services that understand their needs.***

The full Inspection report and a Summary report for children and young people is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/cheshire-east

With the agreement of the Department of Education, areas for improvement from this Inspection will be combined with findings from other inspections and reviews into a Single Improvement Plan, and the implementation of this plan will be overseen by an Improvement Board with an external Chairperson. This will provide a focus for much of the activity in 2013 – 2014, and will be reported upon in the next Cheshire East LSCB Annual Report.

The following outcomes will be pursued in the areas where it has been identified that improvement must be made:-

1. Front line social work practice is consistently good and effective
2. The quality and impact of practice is measurably improved across Cheshire East through effective communication, challenge and scrutiny from the LSCB, Children's Trust, Senior Managers and Members
3. The voice of the child is fully embedded in service planning and delivery
4. There is an effective 'front door' in place to services for children and families. Staff in all agencies have a clear understanding of levels of need to provide the right response at the right time
5. There is effective multi-agency delivery of Early Help
6. Partners, in particular Health, commit to change

Appendix 1 - What is Cheshire East LSCB?

Cheshire East LSCB is attended by senior representatives from the following agencies:-

- Cheshire East Borough Council Children's Services & Youth Offending Service
- Cheshire Constabulary
- CAFCASS
- Cheshire Probation Service
- Central & Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust
- NSPCC
- Cheshire Probation Trust
- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Mid Cheshire NHS Foundation Hospital (Leighton Hospital)
- East Cheshire NHS Trust
- HMP and YOI Styal
- 'The Hub' representing Voluntary, Faith and Independent sectors
- Cheshire Primary School Head Teachers
- Cheshire Secondary School Head Teachers
- Independent Schools
- Cheshire Consortium of Further Education Colleges

Board Meetings are held every two months, and Executive Summaries of the meetings can be seen at

[http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social_care_and_health/children_and_families/lscb -
_safeguarding_children/about_us/board_meetings.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social_care_and_health/children_and_families/lscb_-_safeguarding_children/about_us/board_meetings.aspx)

Much of the business of the Board is delivered through a series of sub-groups (see page 13) and short-term Task Groups.

The Board has an Independent Chairperson, who has no involvement with any of the Board partners.

In 2012-13, LSCB partners contributed £211,730 into a pooled budget to pay for an Independent Chair, Business Support, a multi-agency Training Programme, and also to be prepared for any Serious Case Review. See page 15.

The LSCB's general website is <http://www.cheshireeastlscb.org.uk/>

Appendix 2 - Who funded the LSCB?

LSCB Partner	2012/13 Contribution
East Cheshire NHS Trust	£6,156
Central & Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust	£34,142
Mid Cheshire NHS Foundation Hospital	£5,700
Cheshire Probation Trust	£3,400
Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	£3,721
Cheshire East Council Children's Services	£47,000
Cheshire Constabulary	£22,800
Youth Offending Service	£3,721
CAFCASS	£550
HMP STYAL	£6,000
Primary Schools (129 x £500)	£64,500
Secondary Schools/Academies (20 x £1,000)	£20,000
Total	£217,690

What the LSCB has spent?

	2012/13 Expenditure
Business Unit staffing, travel, and office costs	
- Business Manager (full time)	84,179
- Business Administrator (full time)	
- Training & Development Manager (3 days a week)	
- Training Officer (2.5 days a week)	59,684
- Training Administrator (4 days a week)	
Training programme & venues	10,790
Independent Chair	8,250
LADO contribution	27,400
Serious Case Reviews	0
Communications (inc. website & procedures)	8,604
Board expenses - Venues, Development Day, Lay member & Independent Chair recruitment	2,443
Total	£201,350

Out-turn - underspend	£16,340
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Appendix 3 - What is Cheshire East LSCB doing?

During 2012-13, the LSCB had identified a number of high-level priorities:-

Safeguarding outcomes

The LSCB is aware that all activity should be focused on making children safe; it is the impact on children and their families that matters most. Though this is a very complex issue, the Board is determined to have a greater focus on Safeguarding Outcomes, and is developing performance measures to give an insight into safeguarding in the Neighbourhood, in the Home, and in Educational settings.

Learning Culture – the LSCB has developed new approaches to Serious Case Review and Case Audits that will be much more engaging of frontline staff and of children and families. Learning has been converted into recommendations and action plans, which are monitored for progress by the LSCB. Though the last Serious Case Review for Cheshire East was two years ago, it's findings have influenced local policy and training on working with challenging parents, children missing from home, and schools' recording and sharing of information.

Early intervention for neglect – Neglect continues to be the largest category for Child Protection Plans the LSCB has promoted the use of a tool called the Neglect Graded Care Profile, and has provided training for practitioners' on it's use. Data analysis of neglect cases in Child Protection is identifying where the use of the Graded Care Profile might be most effective.

'Family approach' - Parental drug or alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, or mental health issues – much closer relationships have been established with the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Domestic Abuse Partnership. Practice Guidance on Domestic Abuse for children's services was launched, and a programme to work with perpetrators of domestic violence has been commissioned.

Views of children and their carers – this will remain a priority for the LSCB in the future. Two young people were involved in the recruitment of the LSCB Independent Chair, and two young people from the Children in Care Council participated in a large joint Conference with the Safeguarding Adults Board. Methods to gain the views of children about Child Protection Case Conferences have had a mixed response and need developing further.

Organisational change – the LSCB regularly receives reports from partner agencies on organisational changes and their impact on the delivery of safeguarding services, for example, the transfer of responsibilities of the NHS Primary Care Trust to the Clinical Commissioning Groups, and reductions in overall budgets for the Local Authority and the Police.

What is Cheshire East LSCB doing?

What have the Sub-groups been doing?

Policy & Procedures (3 meetings in 2012/13) – ensured that Child Protection Policies and Procedures are fit for purpose, up to date in relation to national legislation and guidance, and are consistent with those for Cheshire West & Chester, Halton and Warrington LSCBs.

Performance Management & Quality (5 meetings) – a new Performance Report has enabled the Board to analyse safeguarding activity of agencies across the LSCB. This group also scrutinised reports of partner agencies' own safeguarding audits.

Case Audit – established a new model to evaluate the quality of multi-agency case working based on practitioner workshops, and undertook a pilot audit and a case mapping exercise for the Peer Review.

Serious Case Review (4 meetings) prepared for the roll-out of a new 'systems' approach to Serious Case Reviews, and have monitored nationally published Serious Case Reviews for lessons relevant to Cheshire East. There were no SCRs for Cheshire East in this year.

Training & Development (4 meetings) joined together with the Safeguarding Adults Board and Domestic Abuse Partnership. The LSCB's multi-agency Training Programme made available 1250 places on over 50 courses, with over 1060 places taken up on Basic, Intermediate and Specialist safeguarding training.

A separate Annual Report for the LSCB Training Programme is being produced.

Safer Working (3 meetings) ensured that the LSCB was in touch with developments in the Vetting and Barring system and its implications in practice, and also supported the work of the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Missing From Home & Care/Child Sexual Exploitation (4 meetings) working within Government Action Plans, the LSCB has established effective systems to identify and respond effectively to incidents of children missing from home and care or suffering sexual exploitation.

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) (4 meetings) reviewing deaths of all children in Cheshire East for any lessons that may possibly prevent future deaths. There were 30 child deaths in 2012-13 (compared to 19 in the previous year) with an increase in deaths of older children for a variety of reasons. Negotiations have taken place to join up with Cheshire West & Chester, Halton, and Warrington CDOPs during 2013.

A separate Annual Report for the Child Death Overview Panel 2012/13 is being produced.

Private Fostering (3 meetings) is promoting awareness amongst agencies in order to increase the identification of privately fostered children. No new cases of Private Fostering have been identified, and it is felt that it is likely that there are such arrangements that have yet to come to agencies' attention.

A separate Annual Report for Private Fostering 2012/13 is being produced.

E-Safety (2 meetings) has co-ordinated initiatives between Police Schools Liaison, Safeguarding in Education, and the LSCB, and has promoted Digital Safeguarding and CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) trainings.

What is Cheshire East LSCB doing?

What should be next year's priorities?

- **Understanding the Safeguarding system** – improving the Board's own effectiveness and it's understanding of the effectiveness of partners safeguarding activity.
- **Views of children and their carers** – to inform our understanding of what help is most effective
- **Manage Risk from organisational and legislative change**
- **Early Help** - how effective is this in preventing problems escalating?
- **Referrals regarding safeguarding concerns** – Improving multi-agency referral and response to safeguarding concerns.
- **Children with Disabilities** – including the continuity of safeguarding support through transition into adulthood.

Further information:-

LSCB@cheshireeast.gov.uk

01625 374753

www.cheshreeastlscb.org.uk

Child Protection Procedures:-

www.online-procedures.co.uk/cheshireeast/

Concerns about a child:-

Cheshire East Consultation Service 0300 123 5033 (8.30am till 5pm)

or Out of Hours 0300 123 5022